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THE
CHILDREN'S
PRIZE

The title is centered on a dark red, textured book cover. It is enclosed within a circular gold-embossed wreath. The wreath is composed of holly leaves and small berries. The text 'THE CHILDREN'S PRIZE' is written in a gold, serif font. 'THE' is at the top, 'CHILDREN'S' is in the middle, and 'PRIZE' is at the bottom. The letters are slightly raised and have a metallic sheen.

Pet. 2529 e. 64.
1867



"I'M GRANDMOTHER!"

Presented with THE CHILDREN'S PRIZE, January, 1867.



1867.

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THE CHILDREN'S PRIZE

No. I.

JANUARY, 1867.

One Penny.



The Mother's Story.

[P. 2.]



THE MOTHER'S STORY.

WISH I was grown up !
I wish I was a man !"
sighed a bright-faced
child of nine years old,
as his mother came into
the nursery one winter
night, to see if he was
warm and comfortable,
and to tuck him up in his
little crib afresh, before

she went to her own bed-room.

"Why do you wish that, Willie?" she said, setting the candle on the table, and bending down.

"Oh, mother, didn't you hear grandmother telling about what father did when he was a young man?—how he worked so hard, and got such a lot of money; and how he saved the poor people in the burning house; and how he forgave Sam Bennett when he stole the sausages, and sent his wife some flour and meat, because he said Sam must have been in need to have done it; and how—how jolly he is altogether, you know, mother!"

"Yes, I know," said mother, softly. And then she added, in grave, trembling tones, "I hope you'll take after him, dear,—I hope so."

"That I will," the boy echoed, resolutely, springing up in his bed. "When I'm a man, I'll show you what I can do, mother!"

"Oh, but, Willie, father didn't wait to be a man before he showed what he could do! He began to work before his hands were as big and strong as yours."

"Did he, though?" said Willie, doubling up both his little fists, and looking at them thoughtfully.

"Yes, that he did. You and I wouldn't have been so happy now; darling,—have had such a comfortable home, and such a plenty of nice food and clothes, and all that if father hadn't begun to be jolly, as you say long before he was a man."

"Well, that is queer!" continued Willie, gravely. "Why, I thought such little chaps as I am weren't no use to nobody!"

"Ah, there you made a great mistake, my boy! Ask grandmother if you didn't."

"But, mother," again staring at the size of his knuckles by the dim light of the candle, "how do you suppose he managed it?—to get from being a poor little ragged, hungry boy, to such a farmer as he is, with such a lot of land, and bullocks, and sheep, and such a jolly house, and such a pretty carriage, all his own,—eh?"

"How did he manage it?" echoed mother, smiling. "Why, he began by doing what he could when as yet he could do but little, and he kept on with that plan as he grew older and older; and he was safe enough to get rich that way, Willie."

Willie looked at his mother admiringly.

"That's what I'll do," he said.

"And father used to love God when he was a little boy," continued she; "and so you know God loved him, and helped him to get on in the world. Father wouldn't have been what he is if God hadn't found him so good and obedient, and thus kept special watch and guard over him."

"What made him love God when he was a little boy, mother?"

"Well, God put it into his heart, Willie. God made him a Christian when he was a baby, as He made you, and gave him a good mother to teach him what being a Christian meant. And father, though he often hadn't anything to eat, nor any fire to warm him, and hardly a bit of shelter for his head sometimes, learned that God watched over His own, and took care of them. And he learned how much God had done for him, and he loved God for that; and God saw it, and helped him to love Him more. That's the secret, Willie. Father always kept in mind where he would go to when he died, and he knew that if he wanted to go to heaven, where the angels live, he must follow the way that Jesus went. And he found all His footsteps marked in His holy Bible, so that he couldn't make a mistake, you see."

"Marked, mother?"

"Yes. As Jesus lived we should try to live, Willie; we should try to love, and do good, and obey, after the great Master's

pattern. Look here. All through this world His feet have been,—right through it, Willie, wherever we have to go. And the Bible is like a beautiful bright lamp, that shines in the darkness to show us just those very footprints, following one another straight from this sinful earth to the happy heaven. There is no path but that, and Jesus knows it, and, longing for all His people to come after Him, He gave them the lamp to be their guide. Father didn't throw the lamp aside, as many do, thinking they can find the way quite well enough without it; for he knew he couldn't."

Willie easily understood his mother's simple teaching, and his great brown eyes were fixed upon her face in mingled awe and admiration.

"I will try to do what father did," he murmured, at last, when those tender hands had laid him down, and were smoothing the bed-clothes over him.

"Darling, I hope you will," she whispered, fondly; and she bent down to kiss his little face, and hold it against her own for a minute before she left him.

"Mother," he said, "I should like to know more about what father did when he was a little boy like me."

"Should you? Well, I'll tell you some day. Good night, love; God bless you!"

And softly along the passage crept the young mother's feet, and noiselessly the door at the end was opened and closed, and thankfully the head that the blossoms of hardly thirty summers had yet fallen upon was soon bent down in prayer.

The next day was Saturday. In the evening, at the hour of twilight, while father was in his little office, finishing up his week's work, and tea was spread on the table in the pleasant sitting-room ready for his appearance,—while grandmother dozed in her easy chair, and mother herself sat on the low couch by the fireside, where she had lately been lulling her baby to sleep, little Willie crept to her side, and whispered,—

"Now, mother, tell me."

And, while he nestled his curly head upon her shoulder, the mother gently told him this story.

CHAPTER II.

"They were dark days for poor grandmother—dark, except for the hope she had that God would somehow brighten them—when father was born, Willie. Her husband had died only a few weeks before, and left her a widow, in a poor little London garret, lonely and sad, with hardly enough money to pay her rent, and get herself a little food and fire, though it was the middle of a keen, hard winter, and the ground was covered with snow."

Willie's eyes travelled wistfully across the hearth, where that same grandmother sat, so comfortably dozing in her easy chair. *Very* comfortable indeed she looked, in her black silk dress and apron, with her silvery hair shaded by her white cap, her gold-rimmed spectacles on her nose, and her hands, brown and crinkled, but by no means telling of toil, clasped over a piece of knitting, that was some day to adorn the throat of his baby-sister.

"Ah," he thought to himself, "it was father's doing, I know!"

"She was so young then," mother went on, softly, thinking of that sad picture of long-ago; "and she hadn't been much broken in to troubles,—not such troubles as that. When she was married, everything seemed bright and prospering. She had saved some money while she was in service: she was very good and trustworthy, Willie. Mrs. Dale, her last mistress, was sorry enough to lose her; and was not satisfied that she had rewarded her enough for her faithful services until she had more than half furnished the pretty little house poor grandfather had hired for them to live in. And he, too, had a small sum in the savings'-bank—perhaps a big one to him; and he was such a famous carpenter; but soon after they were married—that was here, you know, they had never seen the big city then—trade grew bad, and your grandfather had an accident and hurt his arm; two things that quickly taught them what poverty was. Well, they had neither of them any near relations to fall back upon for help, even had they wished it, which they didn't just then; and they were unwilling, too, so soon after their marriage,

to touch the laid-by money. Yet grandfather's skill as a workman failed him, owing to his weak arm, and little employment could he get. So one night they determined to go to London. 'I've heard that people get rich there who go poorer than we, Nelly,' he said. 'Any way there's more work to be done than in such a place as this, and my lame arm mayn't matter much. I can follow my trade better than a good many of them still.' And so to London they went.

"And did he get work there, mother?" asked Willie.

"No, dear. Grandfather would never ask for it without telling of that accident to his arm, and every one alike refused him. Ah, there are plenty eager to work in that great, hungry city, when work is to be found, and out of the number the strongest and ablest are picked, of course! Then somehow that maimed arm grew weaker as the time passed on, and by-and-by it seemed to make him ill all over. He did a little odd job now and then, and his wife began also to seek for some light work; but they had to take the money from the savings'-bank, and when it was nearly all spent grandfather was lying sick upon his bed, and not likely to get out of it alive any more. In the little garret, in the cloudy November days, so poor and lonely,—and both so young, too!"

Willie's bright eyes grew wistful and pitying. As he thought of his country home, with its big, well-stocked barns, and its broad meadows and corn-fields, and its orchard, and its sweet, free air, he understood how that young couple, disappointed of their hope, must have pined in the roar and smoke of the great city.

"Well, mother, what then?"

"Well, then grandfather died. He died in his garret-chamber, very peaceful, very happy,—yes, happy and thankful that God had given him that fitting preparation for death. And he thanked God for his good and faithful wife, who had worked for him when he was sick, and comforted him when he was suffering, and strengthened him when he was weak, and doubtful, and despairing, and aided him so well in battling with the temptations that disappointment

had arrayed against him. But he never saw your father, Willie,—he never saw the brave son who was to make the widow's life so happy when he was gone."

The eyes of the boy and his mother wandered again to that arm-chair on the hearth-rug, and the thoughts of both flew to the little office close by, where father, alone, was humming a merry air to himself as he bent over his books.

"But, as I said, they were sorrowful days to grandmother when he was born. She was so lonely, and poor, and friendless, in that cold little garret,—so lonely, that she almost wished God had planted the seeds of consumption in *her* young life, that she might have died and been buried too."

"Oh, mother!"

"She didn't wish it long, Willie. When she had a little baby to care for, she was very thankful; and as soon as he began to toddle about, and understand what loving was—nobody ever understood it better than he—she worked bravely at any humble toil within her power for his sake. For she determined that he should not feel the sting of hunger and cold if she could help it. She loved her little baby, Willie, as I love you; and how faithfully he paid it all back to her again!"

"And so will I pay back to you, mother, if I only can."

At that moment the master of the house came into the room,—a strong, broad-shouldered man, whose frank, grave, honest face did one's heart good to look at. No more twilight and caresses for little Willie,—no more story just then; but plenty of quiet fun and enjoyment round the well-spread table, which the shaded lamplight shone down upon so pleasantly.

(To be continued.)

GOING TO CHURCH IN RUPERT'S LAND.

DURING the winter, which is six months long, the whole country is covered with snow, and the cold is most extreme during that time. When Sunday morning arrives you will see numbers of North American Indian converts wending their way through the snow-drifts to the house of prayer. No matter how severe the weather is, they will not stay away from



divine service. The moisture made by the breath of the congregation freezes and hangs down in long icicles from the roof of the church. The hoar-frost will sometimes gather on the pages of the Bible while the minister is reading the sacred Scriptures. A clergyman who has laboured long amongst the Indians, describes his feelings thus :—" I leave home with my heart glowing with a desire to praise God and to preach His salvation to my fellow-creatures. I ride on—a snow-storm

drifting in my face almost blinding myself and my horse—my hands and feet are benumbed, my face perhaps blistered by the biting frost. The chill reaches my heart, and I seem to have lost all feeling. But when I hear two hundred voices joining in the praises of Him whom lately they knew not, my heart grows warm again. I remember His promise who has said, 'I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee;' and I too rejoice in God my Saviour."

A CHILD'S DREAM OF A STAR.*

By Charles Dickens, Esq.



HERE was once a child, and he strolled about a good deal, and thought of a number of things. He had a sister, who was a child too, and his constant companion. These two used to wonder all day long. They wondered at the beauty of the flowers; they wondered at the height and blueness of the sky; they wondered at the depth of the bright water; they wondered at the goodness and the power of God who made the lovely world.

They used to say to one another, sometimes, Supposing all the children upon earth were to die, would the flowers, and the water, and the sky, be sorry? They believed they would be sorry. For, said they, the buds are the children of the flowers, and the little playful streams that gambol down the hill-sides are the children of the water; and the smallest brightspecks, playing at hide-and-seek in the sky all night, must surely be the children of the stars; and they would all be grieved to see their playmates, the children of men, no more.

There was one clear-shining star that used to come out in the sky before the rest, near the church spire, above the graves. It was larger and more beautiful, they thought, than all the others, and every night they watched for it, standing hand in hand at a window. Whoever saw it first cried out, "I see the star!" And often they cried out both together, knowing so well when it would rise, and where. So they grew to be such friends with it, that, before lying down in their beds, they always looked out once again, to bid it good night; and when they were turning round to sleep they used to say, "God bless the star!"

* This beautiful fancy appeared in the first number of *Household Words*, and is reprinted by the distinguished author's very kind permission. It is in itself a *Children's Prize*.

But while she was still very young—oh very very young!—the sister drooped, and came to be so weak that she could no longer stand in the window at night; and then the child looked sadly out by himself, and when he saw the star, turned round and said to the patient, pale face on the bed, "I see the star!" and then a smile would come upon the face, and a little weak voice used to say, "God bless my brother and the star!"

And so the time came, all too soon! when the child looked out alone, and when there was no face on the bed; and when there was a little grave among the graves, not there before; and when the star made long rays down towards him, as he saw it through his tears.

Now, these rays were so bright, and they seemed to make such a shining way from earth to heaven, that when the child went to his solitary bed he dreamed about the star; and dreamed that, lying where he was, he saw a train of people taken up that sparkling road by angels. And the star, opening, showed him a great world of light, where many more such angels waited to receive them.

All these angels, who were waiting, turned their beaming eyes upon the people who were carried up into the star; and some came out from the long rows in which they stood, and fell upon the people's necks, and kissed them tenderly, and went away with them down avenues of light, and were so happy in their company, that lying in his bed he wept for joy.

But there were many angels who did not go with them, and among them one he knew. The patient face that once had lain upon the bed was glorified and radiant, but his heart found out his sister among all the host.

His sister's angel lingered near the entrance of the star, and said to the leader among those who had brought the people thither:

"Is my brother come?"

And he said, "No."

She was turning hopefully away, when the child stretched out his arms, and cried "O sister, I am here! Take me!" and then she turned her beaming eyes upon

him, and it was night; and the star was shining into the room, making long rays down towards him as he saw it through his tears.

From that hour forth, the child looked out upon the star as on the Home he was to go to when his time should come; and he thought that he did not belong to the earth alone, but to the star too, because of his sister's angel gone before.

There was a baby born to be a brother to the child; and while he was so little that he never yet had spoken word, he stretched his tiny form out on his bed, and died.

Again the child dreamed of the opened star, and of the company of angels, and the train of people, and the rows of angels with their beaming eyes all turned upon those people's faces.

Said his sister's angel to the leader :

"Is my brother come?"

And he said, "Not that one, but another."

As the child beheld his brother's angel in her arms, he cried, "O sister, I am here! Take me!" And she turned and smiled upon him, and the star was shining.

He grew to be a young man, and was busy at his books, when an old servant came to him, and said :

"Thy mother is no more. I bring her blessing on her darling son!"

Again at night he saw the star, and all that former company. Said his sister's angel to the leader :

"Is my brother come?"

And he said, "Thy mother!"

A mighty cry of joy went forth through all the star, because the mother was reunited to her two children. And he stretched out his arms and cried, "O mother, sister, and brother, I am here! Take me!" And they answered him "Not yet," and the star was shining.

He grew to be a man, whose hair was turning grey, and he was sitting in his chair by the fireside, heavy with grief, and with his face bedewed with tears, when the star opened once again.

Said his sister's angel to the leader : "Is my brother come?"

And he said, "Nay, but his maiden daughter."

And the man who had been the child saw his daughter, newly lost to him, a celestial creature among those three, and he said, "My daughter's head is on my sister's bosom, and her arm is round my mother's neck, and at her feet there is the baby of old time, and I can bear the parting from her—God be praised!"

And the star was shining.

Thus the child came to be an old man, and his once smooth face was wrinkled, and his steps were slow and feeble, and his back was bent. And one night as he lay upon his bed, his children standing round, he cried, as he had cried so long ago :

"I see the star!"

They whispered to one another, "He is dying."

And he said, "I am. My age is falling from me like a garment, and I move towards the star as a child. And, O my Father, now I thank Thee that it has so often opened, to receive those dear ones who await me!"

And the star was shining; and it shines upon his grave.

SCENES IN THE LIFE OF ST. PETER.



T. PETER was a native of Bethsaida, a town on the shore of the sea of Galilee (St. John, i. 44). His father's name was Jonas; and so, Jesus spoke to him as Simon *Bar-jona* (Matt. xvi. 17), that is, *the son of Jonas*.

His own name was at first Simon, but Jesus called him *Cephas*, or *Peter*, words that both mean a *stone* or a *rock*: and perhaps Jesus gave him this name to show him that he needed firmness and solid steadiness of character.

Simon Peter had a brother named Andrew, and it was he who first brought him to Jesus, saying, *We have found the Messiah, which is, being interpreted, the Christ* (St. John, i. 41). But at the time when Andrew brought Peter to Him, Jesus had not yet begun His public teaching; and so the two brothers stayed for about



"Fear not, from henceforth you shall catch men."



The Happy Home.

{Page 10.

a year at Bethsaida, following their craft of fishermen on the sea of Galilee. When a year had passed, Jesus again came where

they were, and stood by the lake of Genesaret, and the people pressed upon Him to hear the Word of God. And He

saw two fishing-boats drawn up on the shore, *but the fishermen were gone out of them, and were washing their nets.* Jesus asked if He might use one of these boats, and He entered into one which was Simon's, and *prayed him that he would thrust out a little from the land,* and when he had done so, Jesus sat down in the boat and taught the people who stood, or sat on the shore.

When He had finished speaking to the people, *He said unto Simon, Launch out into the deep, and let down your nets.* Simon answered, *Master, we have toiled all the night and have taken nothing, nevertheless at Thy word I will let down the net;* and when they had done this they enclosed such a number of fish that their nets brake. They beckoned to their partners James and John, who were in the other boat, that they should come and help them, and then they filled both the boats so full that they began to sink.

When Simon Peter saw it he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord. Peter said this, not like the wicked, who say unto God, *Depart from us, for we desire not the knowledge of Thy ways* (Job, xxi. 14), but Peter felt his own sinfulness to be so great, and the majesty of Jesus to be so high, that he felt he was not worthy to be near Him. Jesus said unto Simon, *Fear not, from henceforth thou shalt catch men.* Then Peter and Andrew, and James and John, brought their boats to land, and there they left them. They gave up their trade and livelihood, and *forsook all and followed* Jesus to be His disciples.

There are two weighty lessons which we should learn from these scenes in the life of St. Peter.

1. That as Andrew went and found his own brother and called him to come to Jesus, we should try to lead our brethren and sisters into the ways of holiness.

And 2. That as Andrew and Peter forsook all at the Saviour's invitation, and followed Him without delay, so we should not let any earthly things stand between us and Jesus, but should pray that we may be willing to give up even what we value most in the world, if it keeps us back from following Christ as His faithful servants.

THE HAPPY HOME.

HAPPY the home, when God is there,
And love fills every breast;
Where one their wish, and one their prayer,
And one their heavenly rest.

Happy the home, when Jesus' name
Is sweet to every ear;
Where children early lisp His fame
And parents hold Him dear.

Happy the home, where prayer is heard
And praise is wont to rise;
Where parents love the Sacred Word,
And live but for the skies.

Lord, let us in our homes agree,
This blessed peace to gain;
Unite our hearts in love to Thee,
And love to all will reign.



THE GAME OF SOLDIERS.

ERMANN Rosenthal was a little Prussian boy, the only son of his parents. No game of play did he love so much as the game of soldiers, which he often played at with his companions in the village.

One evening, at about five o'clock, he was in a hurry to drink up his last cup of tea to run out and play, when his mother laid her hand on his shoulder and said,—

"My child, you would not be so eager to play at soldiers if you knew all the sorrow and suffering battles bring upon us. If there was to be a war your poor father would have to go and fight, and perhaps be killed, and what would become of us? We should miss him sadly."

She had only just spoken, when the father came in and said,—

"You speak like a prophet, wife. I have to go to the war to-morrow morning, but I hope I shall be back again soon. Hermann, my boy, you must be a comfort to your poor mother, if I am taken away, and you must pray for me that I may be safe to come back or go to heaven."

The war between the Prussians and Aus-

trains, which has lately ended, was a short one, but Hermann's father returned no more, he was amongst the first killed. The poor boy then learnt in good earnest what *playing* at soldiers was, and he hopes very much that he shall not have to go to the war, but that the time will soon come when "they shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks; and nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more."

W. M.



THE FOREIGNERS.

FATHER," said a little girl, as she took her seat at the breakfast-table one morning, "we saw such strange-looking men pass along the road towards the Downs. Nurse says they are foreigners, and we must take care they do not steal the chickens; they are generally thieves," she says.

"But, Mary," said her father, "when you go to stay with Aunt Agnes in Paris, *you* will be a foreigner there, and you would not like to be thought badly of on that account."

"Oh, no," said Mary, laughing.

That evening, when the little girl came to say good night, her father took her on his knee, and said,—

"I have a little tale to tell you, Mary." She looked up eagerly into his face, and waited.

"Last night two little girls like you were playing together on the deck of one of those ships you saw sail into our harbour last week; some rope broke in the rigging, and a big piece of wood fell on one of them, hurting her so much that it was doubtful at first whether she could live."

"Oh, how dreadful!" said Mary, her eyes filling with tears. "Can we send something to make her comfortable? it must be so bad to be ill and in pain in those dark little bed-places on board of a ship. Father, have you seen her?"

"No, Mary. As I was walking over the

Downs after breakfast this morning, I saw two men and a lad seated on the ground, their simple meal was spread on the grass, and, as I came up, I heard one, who seemed to be the eldest, reverently ask God's blessing on the food. They did not speak in English, nor was their dress quite the same as we wear."

"Perhaps they were the foreigners I saw this morning," said Mary.

"I think they were, Mary; they seemed very sad; and as I happened to have a Bible in the language they spoke I opened it, and, going up to them, showed the words of the text you learnt on Sunday—"

("Cast thy burden on the Lord," said Mary, quickly.)

"I could see from the man's smile that these were no new words to him. I sat down, and we spent a happy half-hour 'together.'"

"With those men?—But what about the little girl?"

"The father of the little girl was one of them. He knew that nothing could save his daughter's life without God's blessing; and so he and his companions had left the noisy ship, and, while the mother sat nursing the little sufferer, they had come out into the quiet fields to pray beneath the blue sky."

"Oh, I am so sorry," said Mary, "for what I thought about them this morning. I hope the little girl will live."

The next morning Mary went with her parents on board the ship; and there, in a little, narrow bed, they saw the poor child. She had a trusting, earnest face, and eyes that lighted up with a sweet smile as Mary's father spoke in a language which *she* could not understand. The doctor thought that his little patient would recover now; but as the ship sailed the next day Mary never knew if she did. However, she sent a box of the toys and pictures she liked best herself, hoping they would please this poor little invalid.

As years passed Mary grew to be a woman, and whenever she felt inclined to judge of things or persons merely by their looks, she would call to mind the strange-looking men, and the little suffering face with its beautiful dark eyes.



The Game of Soldiers



The Foreigners.



THE SQUIRE'S OFFER.

THERE was once a rich man who lived in the country; his house was often full of visitors, and everybody flattered him and said how good he was. And he had a kind heart, but was frequently so foolish and wicked as to drink so much wine and brandy that his senses were of no more use to him than if he had been born without the great gift of reason which God has given to every human being. This gentleman had lost his father and mother when he was quite young, and no one was left to tell him of his faults.

One day he had been hunting with several of his friends, and they stopped for refreshment at a little inn. On entering the parlour, the gentleman was much struck with the beauty of a little boy who was playing there. He asked him several questions, and found that his name was George, which happened to be the same as his own. The friends stayed some time, and when they were going the gentleman, who was called the Squire, asked the landlord if he could speak to George's mother. A gentle-looking woman soon entered the room, and heard with surprise that this man, of whose riches everybody spoke, wished to adopt

her little George. There was no doubt that it would be a pleasant thing for her boy to be brought up like a gentleman's son and live in ease and wealth, and she knew that she and her husband could only get for him just the necessaries of life; but yet, with many thanks for the offered kindness, she refused. The Squire could not believe what he heard, and his friends begged her to think of what she said; but still, without the slightest hesitation, she repeated her decision. Then he asked, in a great passion, what could be her reason for refusing his offer? She hesitated; but, when he angrily insisted upon an answer, she said, "I know, sir, that I can never give our boy any advantages for this world; but when he was born his father and I promised each other that he should always have the best examples we could get for him."

"And do you think," asked the gentleman, "that he will see better manners in your poor hut than in my house? Tell me!"

"I would rather," said the young mother meekly, "see little Georgie grow up to work hard, like his father does, than live in riches and learn to be a drunkard."

The Squire was very angry and went away. But still he often thought of little Georgie with his blue eyes and golden hair; and, when his anger was over, he admired the mother who was so willing to give up all the advantages of wealth rather than run the risk of spoiling her boy's character. And then he thought that, if a poor woman considered such habits as his would disgrace her boy, a rich man might well be ashamed of them. And soon it began to be rumoured that the master at the Hall was changed; that his old habits were suddenly relinquished. As time passed—this was known to be true; and then Georgie was sent to school by him, and at last adopted as his son; for he would often say that he owed to the boy's mother more than to any one in the world, because she was the first person who had told him the truth about himself in all his life.

WHAT JESSIE LOST IN THE BROOK.



JESSIE was a little girl going to school. She had her spelling-book, and slate-pencil, and sewing-work, and thimble, and a box of beads, and she had *time*, too. "Good-bye, mother," she said, kissing her. "Good-bye, my dear," said mother, "don't lose anything."

A little brook crossed the road on Jessie's way to school. It was running to the river, and it ran very fast. Jessie stopped to look at it as it twinkled in the sun. She stooped down, and put in her hand to stop it. It would not be stopped. It jumped over her hand and through her fingers, and ran off as fast as it could. While Jessie was playing with the water she lost something. But she did not miss it then. I should not wonder if the water's not stopping put the little girl in mind that *she* ought not to stop, so she jumped up and hurried to school.

When she got to school the door was locked, and a card with staring letters—"Late!" hung at the door. "Oh, dear

dear," cried Jessie, very much vexed; "now I shall get a bad mark, for I have no excuse." When the door was unlocked she went in, and at noon she told Miss Marvin how it happened she was late.

"You met with a serious loss at the brook, did you not, Jessie?" said Miss Marvin; "something you can never find."

"Loss!" said little Jessie, looking up, surprised; "I did not miss anything. It was not my spelling-book, surely?"

"A greater loss than your spelling-book, because the book might be picked up," said the teacher.

"Not my silver thimble?" said Jessie, feeling in her pocket.

"A silver thimble could be found," said Miss Marvin; "this cannot be."

"Do you think that I lost my box of beads?" asked Jessie.

"If you had, I suppose you could easily buy another box."

"So I could a slate-pencil, if I had lost that."

"Yes," said Miss Marvin; "but what you lost cannot be found or bought again, nor can it be made up in any way—it is lost for ever."

"Oh," said Jessie, looking sorry and puzzled; "but what is it, Miss Marvin?"

"It is lost *time*, Jessie," said the teacher.

"Yes," said the little girl, blushing, "that I did lose by the brook. I lost time."

"And you missed it very much when you got to the schoolroom door," said the teacher.

"Oh, I did, Miss Marvin," said Jessie, "I did. I would have given anything for a minute more."

But a minute lost can never be got back; it is lost for ever. Nor can one be borrowed, or bought, or begged. A Queen of England, who had not long to live, is said to have cried out, "Thousands of pounds for an inch of time!" But thousands of pounds could not buy it.

God gives every child golden minutes enough to use, but none to lose. Try to spend them in such a manner that you may give for every day—

"Some good account at last."



THE DOG AT HIS MASTER'S GRAVE.



"Faithful even unto death."

THE bell had tolled, and they had buried the old man. The moon rose, and the poor worn-out old dog laid down at the foot-end of the poor worn-out old man. Let us hope that kindness will be shown to him, in allowing him to die there. He will not touch food any more. He has gnawed the rope that prevented him from following the coffin; he has scratched the earth off the newly-made grave—but his strength is gone. His grey face was once a bright black-and-tan; his once shiny coat is ragged and dry; his days, once spent in enjoyment of life and work, have lately been passed in timidly seeking for a stray morsel, and following the tottering steps of the old man now underground, or laying at his feet where he sat. The only remaining strength in the poor dog was his love, and that was not unaltered either by want or weakness.

Some people think that the attachment of dogs is often stronger to a poor master than to a rich one. I do not think it is so because of the poverty of the master, but simply because they are more together and depend more on each other. I know two instances of dogs who refused food and died a few days after their masters. The one belonged to an artist in easy circumstances, and it was a small London terrier: the other a Blenheim spaniel, living in the splendid house of a rich banker on the Continent. The effigy of the faithful pet is added to the tombstone—not like the hound on ancient monuments to show that a noble knight is buried beneath, but in memory of the dog's fidelity.

In 1817 a book was published by a Mr. Blaine on the art of healing diseases of dogs. But having been a surgeon, people thought he had degraded himself by his studying the diseases of animals, and he thought it necessary to make an excuse for

his so doing in an *Introduction*, in which he gives some touching accounts of the fidelity of dogs. There is one which has a direct bearing on the picture, and, I trust, it will be welcome to the readers of *The Prize*. It is strictly true.

In the parish of St. Olave, Tooley Street, Southwark, the churchyard is detached from the church, and surrounded by high buildings, so that no one can get in except by one large, close gate. A poor tailor of this parish, dying, left a small cur dog that would not be consoled for his loss. The little animal would not leave his dead master, not even for food; and whatever he ate had to be placed in the same room with the corpse. When the body was removed for burial, this faithful attendant followed the coffin. After the funeral he was hunted out of the churchyard by the sexton, who the next day again found that the animal had made his way by some strange means into the enclosure, and had dug himself a bed on the grave of his master. Once more he was hunted out, and again he was found in the same place on the following day. The good clergyman of the parish, hearing of the circumstance, had him caught, taken home, and fed, and tried by every means to win the animal's affections; but he was true to his late master, and took the first opportunity to escape and return to his grave. With true benevolence the worthy clergyman permitted him to follow the bent of his inclinations; and had built for him upon the grave a small kennel, which was supplied once a-day with food and water. Two years this faithful dog lived in this manner, when death put an end to his griefs.

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P. 15.

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Hot Rolla.

THE MOTHER'S STORY.

(Continued from page 4.)

CHAPTER III.

It was Sunday. The sweet clash of the village-bells, chiming for evening service, ceased to be heard in the old farm-house, and in the sitting-room, where the curtains were drawn and the fire burning brightly, the young mother sat in her chair by the hearth, and her boy was on her knee. It was very still. Baby, in the nursery, was fast asleep; father and grandmother, with the rest of the household, were in church; and the only sound was mother's soft voice, and the drowsy ticking of the clock.

"Now, Willie," she said, giving the coals a fresh stir with the poker, and arranging her dress to prevent its getting scorched, "we are housekeepers, you know; so we must not forget to peep at the kitchen fire, nor to listen if baby cries."

"All right, mother. Isn't it nice for you and me to keep house to-night? You can tell me some more about what father did, can't you?"

"Yes, dear, if you wish." Then, after a short silence, she said, gravely, "Willie, haven't we a happy home?"

"Haven't we?" echoed Willie. "It's the jolliest of jolly places!"

Another short silence. Mother's eyes—it might be the heat of the fire—glistened as they wandered round that cosy room. So cosy it was, with its solid, comfortable furniture,—its shining mahogany, and thick crimson curtains,—its goodly array of book-shelves and pictures, in the warm, soft light. Yet in all that room there was nothing so pleasant to look at as its young mistress. There was nothing so charming as that sweet, sensible face by the fireside,—nothing so neat as her merino dress, and her silky, braided hair; and nothing so pretty as the loose, loyng clasp of those two hands round the child, who sat on a footstool and leant against her knees.

"Well, where did I leave off last night, Willie?"

"Let's see!—you said grandmother was very miserable, and then got happy again; and then you said she worked hard in London to try and not let father be cold and hungry. Oh, mother, was father ever cold and hungry, or grandmother?"

"Sometimes, Willie, for grandmother was not very strong, nor used to such rough work as she had to do. But she managed to get food for them, and some sort of shelter, until father was nearly eight years old; and she managed to teach him to read, and write, and do sums: he had never been to school."

"But after that, mother?"

"After that she fell into bad health, and was not able to work hard any more. It was then, Willie, that father began to earn his own living and hers."

"Oh, mother, what could he do at eight years old?"

"What could he do?" echoed mother, her eyes kindling at the very thought of that bygone boyish heroism; "I will tell you. He could get up in the dark on bitter cold winter mornings, and light the little fire for breakfast, and go out to the pump to fill the kettle, before grandmother awoke; and then he could pile up his basket with hot rolls at the baker's, and spend an hour or so in the crescents, and terraces, and squares near to his home, trying to earn a few pence by selling them: and people liked that honest, manly little fellow, Willie, who worked for his mother at only eight years old. He could trudge home afterwards, swinging his empty basket in one hand and jingling his money in the other, to enjoy his well-earned breakfast. And then he could make his little bed in the corner, and sweep up the hearth, and go down on his knees to do the same for the floor, until his mites of arms were stiff. He could run about for his mother, peel the potatoes for dinner, study his lessons, and do a lot of netting besides. All this he could do, and *did*."

"Netting!" exclaimed Willie; "that's girl's work, mother."

"Never mind. He was too little for any other. He used to make nightcaps to

sell, besides potato and fruit-tree nets, in his leisure hours; and there were always people to encourage that brave little child of eight years old, who did what he could to help his mother.

"But by-and-bye he grew older and stronger, and able to do harder work. First he was a milk-boy, but he didn't prosper at that trade: his notions of honesty—which he stoutly declared, and as fearlessly tried to act out—ran counter to those of his master, and so he was turned off after a few days' trial. Then he was errand-boy to a grocer; and here he did well for several months, and earned very fair wages. But the grocer had a violent temper, and once, when your father provoked him, by overturning and damaging a basket of goods, he gave him a thrashing, and sent him about his business."

"Brute!" muttered Willie; and the colour rose in his cheeks.

"Ah, that wasn't the worst difficulty that befell him in his struggle upwards! Well, he went home to his mother, whom he had more than half supported by his regular wages and the money he earned at odd times by his patient industry, and there took up his old trade for awhile. And with that he eagerly set to work to improve his writing, and exercise himself in arithmetic. He netted and did sums both at once, using his head and his hands; and he worked harder at that time than he ever did before. For he was a strong, strapping lad of fourteen, and he was beginning to understand what a man might do in the world with trying. On Sundays he used to take his mother to church, and linger with her after service sometimes to hear the clergyman catechise the children, thereby gaining all he could of the best teaching. And then he went to be confirmed,—to have God's blessing sealed afresh on his hopeful young life. There were many who tried to laugh him out of his religion, but it was strong enough to stand it. Too well he knew the value of what he sought and obtained at God's altar to cast it aside for that. Oh, Willie," and mother's soft eyes were dazzled with tears, "it is no wonder that he has been so prosperous!

"At fifteen he went into business again as stationer's assistant,—from thence to a large and notable publishing-house; and in both these situations he found opportunity for improving his mind by hard and diligent study. At seventeen he got into a merchant's office, with a salary of fifty pounds; and his new master, a kind and good old man, took to him and encouraged him, and was a firm friend to him until he died. Now he and his mother were able to rent a little house, and live more comfortably. She had a piece of carpet on the floor of her sitting-room, and an easy chair by the fire-side, where she used to sit and sew in the long evenings, and earn something to help her son. He did not let her do other work, nor too much of that; and often he would take her out for a stroll after business hours, or go with her to church. But during many of those precious evening hours, while she was plying her needle, he would pore over his books, striving after knowledge,—laying a foundation for his after success in the world. He was in that office three years,—happy, busy, useful years they were; and five times his salary was raised by his master, showing how faithfully he did his appointed work."

"And then, mother?" suggested Willie; for mother had come to a full stop, and was gazing thoughtfully into the fire: "well, mother, and then!"

CHAPTER IV.

At that second appeal mother's eyes slowly came back from the fire.

"Listen, Willie," she said; "I am going to draw you a picture. Think of a cosy bed-room, with a blazing fire, in a pretty white house with bow-windows, overlooking a broad and sunny road in the west of London."

"Grandpapa's," murmured Willie, under his breath.

"There is a little white-curtained bed, and a little wash-stand and dressing-table at the far end, but by the fire a low couch, and lounging chair. There are bookshelves, pictures,—everything pretty, and comfortable. It is a still October evening,

but almost dark, for it is past five o'clock. Two young ladies are there; they have just dressed for dinner. One of them, the eldest, a delicate-looking girl, who is wearing a quiet, soft dress of pale grey, with a little lace frilling as a boundary line between it and her white neck and arms—oh, how well I remember it!—is sitting on the couch by the fireside, bending down to caress her companion. She had such a sweet face, and such shining hair, as bright as gold; and she was so kind, and loving, and good to her sister, Willie. But she is dead now;” and mother sighed deeply. “She—her sister, I mean—was crouching down at her feet on the hearth-rug, and resting her head on that soft grey dress. She had a letter in her hand, an open letter, and something she had been reading had made her face very bright and joyous,—aye, and her heart too. And they were chatting together in that great warm room, those two young sisters; and what do you think they talked about, eh?”

“I don't know, mother. I only know it is Aunt Amy and yourself that you are speaking about.”

“Yes, it was Aunt Amy and me. And we were talking of your father. Willie, I have chosen this little picture out of a lot of pretty ones, because it is one I have carried about with me ever since. Yes, I had Amy then; she was my mother as well as my sister, and she was never so dear to me as on that night. For in that letter your father asked me to be his wife,—his as soon as he could possess a fit home to take me too; and Aunt Amy put aside all her sorrow at letting me go to be glad and happy with him then.”

“But how did you come to know each other?” questioned Willie, seeing that a link in his mother's story was missing; “and was he still in that London office?”

“I must go back a bit, dear. Yes, he was still in that office; his three years were almost ended, and he was earning then a salary of a hundred and fifty pounds. He was a confidential man in the firm, though he was so young, and only standing next in importance to my own father, who was its junior partner. My father was

very fond of him from the first; indeed, a strong friendship grew up between them, that became stronger as time went on. One night, a year before we were engaged, we were having a little evening party, and my father invited him to come. That was our first knowledge of him, and both Amy and I were struck with his manliness, and admired him for it. So well educated he had become, so courteous and gentlemanly too, from his steady self-training, that we soon counted him among our friends; and, Willie, I soon grew to love him better than any body else,—very soon!”

Mother paused; and Willie, satisfied, begged her to go back to the picture.

“Amy was telling me how happy I ought to be. Better than I, she could see the true worth of his character, and she could see, too, what a grand prospect it held out for the future. They all said, ‘Not yet;’ but no one dreamed of discouraging us. I remember how Amy talked that night. ‘He is steady, and strong in soul as well as body; clear-headed, and wise, and good. Step by step he will fight his way through the world, as only a man can; and, under God, he will be a safe guide and protector to you, Maggie. The love of such an one is a precious thing, more precious than lands and gold.’ Truly she was right there. Dear Amy! she did not live to see her words come true. Yet I sat there by that fire in the twilight, with her arms around me, and my head in her lap, feeling only one pang of sorrow—only one, and that was that I was going to leave my darling sister alone.

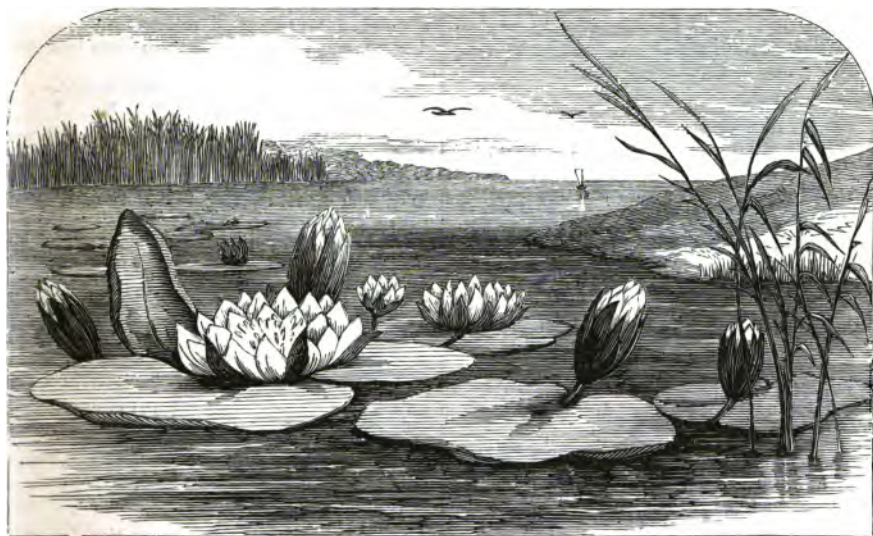
“By-and-by we went down to dinner. And in the evening I saw your father, and he and I made the promise that we are keeping now. The night came then, and tempered my great joy; and I lay in Amy's kind, sheltering arms, and cried myself to sleep. The old home-love was very precious, Willie; and when I gave her the good-night kiss it seemed rather hard after all to think of going away. But Amy said very quietly, ‘I shan't lose you yet, darling. We shall be together a little while,—a little while here, and always by-and-by. Nay, perhaps I shall never

lose sight of you, Maggie, from this very night that I have you here in my arms.' I nestled closer to her then, but I didn't quite think what she was talking about. Not many months afterwards I saw her lying alone, on that same little bed, in the white Confirmation-dress which she had kept for ten years, with lilies of the valley strewn all over it. I remembered it then. Her face was cold and colourless, like beautiful carving in alabaster, and her hair made a framework of gold, and the flowers a crown; and when I looked at that face with the happy smile still there, so trustful and calm, how could I help remembering! And the old treasured dress re-

minded me; and the flowers, too. It seemed scarcely like a parting, after all. And always now, when I go to kneel before the altar in church, I seem to hear and understand that little sentence of hers,—
'I shall never lose sight of you, Maggie.'

Willie listened intently. He could not fathom the deep meaning that those simple words expressed, but as he slept in his little bed that night he dreamt of the angels keeping 'watch and ward' beside him. And one was like the picture of Aunt Amy that hung in mother's room, only that she had a white dress on and wings.

(To be continued.)



WATER-LILIES.

SHUT up, little Lilies, the sun has gone down,

And our home his last blessing receives,
Come furl up your petals, and draw in your heads,

And we'll tuck you up under the leaves."

So spake the old Lilies, and packed themselves close

In their cosy green waterproof coats;
The young ones all hated these regular hours,
And were frisky as any young goats.

They vowed and declared that they would not go down,

Let their grandmothers say what they would:
So they danced a quadrille to the song of the Gnats,

Which they thought was uncommonly good.

Then followed a waltz, which quite tired them out;

So, with many a kiss and good-night,
They dreamily rocked on their watery couch,
And soon they had slipped out of sight.

But one rogue of a Lily would not go to bed,
And would not shut his great yellow eye,
Determined to sit up as long as he could,
Just to peep, and to peer, and to spy.

He'd made up his mind he would know at
what hour

Madam Reed Sparrow went to her nest;
The pert blue Forget-me-nots too, why should
they

Wide-awake be, when he went to rest?

"Come down," said a tired little flower at his
side,

"If we sit up we shall grow so yellow,
Like those upstarts who call themselves lilies
down there,

Their complexions are shockingly sallow."

"Oh Lily-belle, darling, just sit up this once,
You shall see such a beautiful sight,
The Glow-worm is out with his lantern, I know,
He's going to a party to-night."

"I would if I could, but you see—that I can't,
For my back does so ache from that waltz,
And if we are ill, all our mothers will say,
'There, I told you—'tis all your own faults.'"

"Well, now, I am growing quite cross, I
declare,

I always did think you were silly,
I am not afraid of a pain in my back—
You have not the heart of a Lily."

"I'm weaker than you," and she sighed, but
she stayed,
And truly a marvellous sight
Was that which the two little Lilies beheld,
On that naughty, that wonderful night.

They looked up to heaven and saw the far sky,
All a-blaze with its glorious eyes,
Till Lily-belle cried out, "The glow-worms,
oh! look!

They are crawling all over the skies."

And afar and afaint o'er the glistening grass
Came the Grasshopper's comical note;
And the soft curling mist, as it wrapped all
around,
Seemed in silence of gladness to float.

But, suddenly darkening the river's white
breast,

A monster of blackness appeared,*
And close to the beds of our two little friends,
Its terrible body was steered.

* Probably a barge.

And alack and alas! oh if Lilies wore shoes,
How these would have shaken in theirs;
For two horrible arms from the monster's
black sides,
Did distressingly add to their cares.

For they reached out so far, as they scrambled
along,

That the Lilies were quite in the way,
And one terrible stroke from the cruel right
oar

Fell exactly where Lily-boy lay.

With a thundering crash it battered his head,
And blackened his poor yellow eye,
And strained at his roots, and bedraggled his
leaves,

Till they left him a regular guy.

And Lily-belle, she, with a petal knocked out,
Looked not nearly so neat as before;
I think, too, the place where the lost leaf had
been,

Must have felt very queer and so sore.

* * * * *

That dreadful next day, when the flowers got
up,

Oh, dear! how they laughed, to be sure;
Our poor little friends, with their sad, dirty
looks,
Thought they could not such rudeness
endure.

The Coot brought her young ones to look at
their plight,

The Forget-me-nots laughed till they cried;
A ticklish young Minnow went head over heels,
The Convolvulus split her frail sides.

The Marsh-mallow giggled behind her leaf
fan,

Madam Reed Sparrow paused on her way,
To say with a flirt of her impudent tail,
"How pretty you're looking to-day!"

How thankful they were, when the day was
all done,

For with night came some rest from their
pain,

What a warning they'd had! Between you
and me,

I don't think that they'll do so again.

Now, dear little readers, I hope you'll not
think

That my story is useless and old;
The moral is this, as perhaps you've found out,
"Always go to bed when you are told."

SCENES IN LIFE OF ST. PETER.



HEALING HIS WIFE'S MOTHER.

WHEN Peter and Andrew, James and John, had become Christ's disciples, they stayed at Capernaum, where Christ usually lived, and which is therefore called *His own city*, (St. Matthew, ix. 1,) and one day while they were there, Jesus cast out a devil in a very public and startling way (St. Mark, i. 21-31, St. Luke, iv. 33-39) and the disciples seeing this may have asked the question one of another—Could not our master, who can do such wonders, cure Peter's wife's mother?—and anon, *they tell Him of her* (St. Mark, i. 30), nay, more, *they besought Him for her* (St. Luke, iv. 38), and then they go to Peter's house. We might wonder that Peter had a house—when we know that on the shore of the sea of Galilee he *forsook all* to follow Jesus; but willingness to forsake anything is counted as being the same as really doing so, and though Peter had a house, he was ready any day to leave it at Christ's word.

When Jesus and His disciples entered the house, He went to the couch on which the sick woman lay; *He took her by the hand and lifted her up, and immediately the fever left her* (St. Mark, iv. 31.). St. Luke, who was a physician, and so would know about it, calls it in his gospel a *great fever*, as if it were one of the worst kind—one of which she were likely to die—and yet, at the word of Jesus, in a moment, *immediately, she arose and ministered unto them* (St. Luke, iv. 39).

A fever generally leaves sick folk very weak for many days after it has left them, but Peter's wife's mother had her strength restored at once, and got up as if nothing had been the matter, and began at once to wait upon them, and to show her gratitude by bringing them such refreshment as she thought they required.

Let us learn from this scene that the

best help we can give the sick is to pray for them as the disciples *besought* Jesus for Peter's wife's mother. In the Litany we pray for *all sick persons*; and when any of those dear to us are sick, we should specially *tell* Jesus about them; and though we do not now look for such miracles as that *immediately* the illness should be removed, yet the prayer of faith may save the sick, and the Lord may raise them up (James, v. 15); or even if the pain and weakness of the body be continued, Jesus may yet work the inner and unseen miracle, and *immediately* give strength, and peace, and patience to the soul.

ANGER.

O H! anger is an evil thing,
And spoils the fairest face;
It cometh like a rainy cloud
Upon a sunny place.

One angry moment often does
What we repent for years;
It works the wrong we ne'er make right.
By sorrow or by tears.

It speaks the rude and cruel word
That wounds a feeling breast;
It strikes the reckless, sudden blow,—
It breaks the household rest.

We dread the dog that turns in play,
All snapping, fierce, and quick;
We shun the steed whose temper shows
In strong and savage kick.

But how much more we find to blame,
When passion wildly swells
In hearts where kindness has been taught,
And brains where reason dwells.

The hand of peace is frank and warm,
And soft as ringdove's wing;
And he who quells an angry thought
Is greater than a king.

Shame to the lips that ever seek
To stir up jarring strife;
When gentleness would shed so much
Of Christian joy through life.

Ever remember in thy youth,
That he who firmly tries
To conquer and to rule himself,
Is noble, brave, and wise.

ELIZA COOK.



"And immediately the fever left her."—ST. MARK iv. 31.



"Suffer little Children to come unto Me."—MATT. xix. 14.

THE BEST LOVE OF ALL.

LITTLE children, Jesus loves you,
Loves you every day and night,
Watches you while waking, sleeping,
Keeps you ever in His sight.

Loves you in the time for working,
Loves you in the time for play,
Loves you through the night's long silence,
Loves you in the stir of day.

Mother loves you, father loves you,
Sisters, brothers, great and small;
Friends and playmates love you dearly,
Jesus loves you more than all.

Mother's thoughts are often busy,
Father's often out all day,
JESUS CHRIST is always near you,
Sees your thoughts, hears all you say.

When you're feeling very happy,
With some games or favourite friends,
Don't forget that even Jesus
Each and every pleasure sends.

When your hearts are very wretched,
Even children's sometimes are,
Don't forget that Jesus pities
Every little sufferer.

Don't forget His arms are near you,
That they are so kind and strong;
If you love Him He will never
Suffer aught to hurt you long.

He is sorry for your sorrow,
Knows exactly how you feel;
And the tiniest little heartache
His kind hand will gently heal.

Then there are some little troubles
Even mother does not know;
Go tell Jesus all about them,
Jesus CHRIST, who loves you so.

Or whenever you are tired,
(He was often tired too)
Pray to Him for strength and patience,
He will send His help to you.

Would you grieve this dearest Jesus?
Children, though you are so small,
Every time that you are naughty,
You do grieve the Lord of all.

You must ask Him please to help you,
When you're trying to be good;
He will aid you if you ask Him,
In His Word He said He would.

Therefore, when you're feeling naughty,
Stop, and very softly say—
"JESUS CHRIST, have pity on me,
Take my wicked will away."

Then your naughtiness you'll conquer,
If you try with all your might;
Little children, Christ's own soldiers,
You must learn His foes to fight.

Learn to fight with angry tempers,
With the wish to steal and lie,
With the thoughts of disobedience,
Children, fight them manfully.

Oh, you dearest little children,
You whom Jesus deigned to bless,
May your lives be pure, and gentle,
Full of holy happiness.

And when all this life is over,
When has come the long, long night,
Then may holy angels bear you
To the "land of pure delight." MIA.



ETHEL'S QUESTION.

BEFORE I tell you what
Ethel's question was, I
must introduce you to a
little dog, who is a great
pet of ours.

She is a real Skye terrier, with long, soft hair, a sort of fawn colour. Her legs are very short, almost covered with hair; and when she goes out of doors, the little boys in the street often laugh at her, because they say she has no legs. We call her Flossie, and she hears her name in a moment, even if she was fast asleep just before. Her quick ear is a great protection to the house. For she can catch the sound of a strange footstep when it is still quite far off, and barks till the intruder is out of the way. Flossie is very amusing too, as well as useful. She can stand up on her hind-legs, and shake her front paws more quickly than you could move your hands. This is when she wants something to eat. It is easy to find out whether she is thirsty, by showing her a tumbler or basin; if she wants water, she jumps about, and wags her tail, looking up most beseechingly all the time; but if not, she turns away her head, and looks down on the ground.

I am sorry to say she is a dainty little dog; for if two dishes are on the table, one of which she likes better than the

other, Flossie will take only the thing that she likes ; and walks away offended, if you offer her anything else. Salt fish and salt meat she is very fond of, but game and poultry will make her almost forget good manners : for she jumps up on a chair, and puts her paws on the table in her eagerness to get a bit. Another bad habit of hers is to come in, wet and dirty from a walk in the town, and curl herself up in a corner of the drawing-room window-curtains, or on an easy chair. But with all these faults, she is a dear little dog, and we should be sorry to lose her. Some time ago, one of the children fell out of bed on to the floor. Flossie happened to be in the nursery, so she ran up to Alice, and began to lick her all over, just to show how sorry she was for her fall ; but the poor little girl was dreadfully frightened, perhaps fancying it was some wild animal, as she was not quite awake, and the room was dark ; so she screamed as loud as she could, and her nurse soon ran to see what was the matter. But now I must tell you about Ethel. She and Flossie are great friends, and one day, when they had been playing together a long time, some one said, "I think you are very fond of that little dog."

"Yes, I am," Ethel said.

"Would you be sorry if she were to die?" the lady asked.

"Oh yes, very sorry."

Then, after a pause, the little girl said, "Do you think Flossie will go to Heaven when she dies?"

"No, I don't think so," was the answer ; and the child seemed quite sad when she heard it.

You see this little girl's love for the dog made her wish that it should have the greatest blessing she had ever heard of ; and if she had this kind thought for a little dog, don't you think we should all have as much for each other ; and wish to be quite sure that every one we know and love should live with God in heaven. If we really did so, there would be more peace and happiness, less teasing, and fewer quarrels ; for we should then try to avoid everything that can lead to sin, knowing that nothing sinful or unholy can enter into the kingdom of heaven. D. C.

THE CHILD'S FIRST GRIEF.

OH ! call my brother back to me !

I cannot play alone :

The summer comes, with flower and bee,—
Where is my brother gone ?

"The butterfly is glancing bright

Across the sunbeam's track !

I care not now to chase its flight—

Oh ! call my brother back !

"The flowers run wild—the flowers we sowed

Around our garden-tree ;

Our vine is drooping with its load,—

Oh ! call him back to me !"

"He would not hear thy voice, fair child ;

He may not come to thee :

The face that once like spring-time smiled,

On earth no more thou'lt see.

"A rose's brief, bright life of joy,

Such unto him was given :

Go ! thou must play alone, my boy,

Thy brother is in heaven."

"And has he left his birds and flowers ?

And must I call in vain ?

And through the long, long summer hours,

Will he not come again ?

"And by the brook and in the glade,

Are all our wanderings o'er ?

Oh ! while my brother with me played

Would I had loved him more."

MRS. HEMANS.

THE HINDOOS AND THE BIBLE.



HOW strange it is that the things that do us good we often like least, and the things that do us harm we like best. I know a little girl who likes sour apples better than good food, a little boy who always walks in the puddles of water instead of on the dry ground. So there are some persons who take up any book rather than the Bible. But it is not so with many of the heathen abroad, who love the Bible when they begin to understand it. In India some of the heathen went to hear a missionary preach. He told them the way to heaven, and that Jesus Christ died to save them from their sins. They would not believe that one person could die for



To be read through.

for so many; they thought, like Naaman, that they must each do some great thing to save themselves. One was going to fall down under Juggernaut the chief idol, and let the wheels of his car pass over his body; another was going to walk hundreds of miles on his knees; another was going to have sharp hooks thrust through his body and be swung round on a pole; and another thought of an easier way,—he was going to the “praying-machine,” and pay a large sum of money to have a prayer turned round a great many hundred times to save his soul.

But when they heard the words, “Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and be baptized,” they laughed, because it seemed so easy. However, one of them went up to the missionary and begged him to lend him a book about Jesus Christ; so the mis-

sionary lent him a Bible, and told him to bring it back when he had finished it.

The man took it away, and some of his friends were very curious to see what was in it, so he offered to read it to them. They came several days, and at last he had finished it; but they did not laugh at it any longer: although they could not understand it all, they learnt enough to make them know they had sinful and wicked hearts. The man who was going to put his prayer in the *praying machine* was much delighted with the Lord's Prayer, and said it instead of using “vain repetitions.” The man who was going to walk so many miles on his knees to worship an idol, learnt that the true God was not far from every one of us, and that in Him we “live and move, and have our being;” the man who was going to have



The good it did.

books thrust through his body, learnt to trust to Him who was pierced for our sakes; and the man who was ready to fall beneath the idol's car, learnt that an idol could do him no good. After they had read the New Testament through, each of these men longed for a copy of it for himself; and in the picture we see the man who borrowed the book bringing his companions with him, and telling the missionary how much good the book had done them.

They all begged they might be taught more about it, and about Him who died that they might live. They each gladly bought a copy and brought it with them when they came to be taught. When they understood enough of it, and not only learned to believe in Jesus Christ, but to love Him, they were baptized, and admitted

into the body of Christ's Church on earth, there to prepare for Christ's Church in heaven. Those of the men who had little children brought them also to be baptized as you were when you were infants, and the elder children who could understand were taught as their parents had been.

There are now many thousands of Christians in India who have gladly given up the worship of idols, and serve the true God. We must pray to the Saviour to bless the missionaries in their work, and we must give what we can to send God's servants and His Word across the sea to lead the heathen out of darkness into the marvellous light of the gospel. W.M.

"All the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God."—*Isa. lii. 10.*

ARTHUR'S FIRST TROUBLE AT SCHOOL.



I WANT to tell you, dear children, about a little boy whom I knew and loved very much. His name was Arthur Conway, and he had one sister, called Helen. Theirs was not a very happy home. Their father was a stern man, who cared, or seemed to care, but little for them, and took no interest in their pleasures or their sorrows, and he was so much away from home, that they knew very little of him, and I am sorry to say, feared him rather than loved him.

But of their mother they were extremely fond. She was a gentle, sweet-tempered woman, and when after a long illness she died, leaving the poor little ones so lonely in the world, they felt as if they could never be happy again. Helen was just eleven years old, and Arthur three years younger. She was strong and healthy, but he was a delicate child, who seemed to cling to others for support and help. After their mother's death, he looked up to his sister, and she took as much care of him as if she had been a little woman. Sometimes she would say to him: "You know, Artie dear, I am a *great deal* older than you are." They soon became all in all to each other; they planned their own occupations and amusements, and no one took much notice of the loving little pair.

One evening their father told them that Arthur was to go to school next week. You may imagine how bitterly they grieved, and how that night they lay in their beds and cried as if their hearts would break. Poor children, they had no one to talk kindly to them about it, and show them how much worse it would be for them to grow up ignorant, than to be separated now for a while!

So Arthur went to school, a long way off, and it was a sad, sad day to both of them. Helen was to have a governess at home. She felt very dull at first without Arthur to play with, but she soon got to

love Miss May, for she was a kind lady, and led her to talk about the things she cared for, and of course Arthur was often the subject of her little stories. Now Arthur had promised to write to Helen as soon as ever he could write well enough, and though he got on very fast at school, it seemed a long time to the little girl before his letter came. She felt very proud when the postman knocked, and brought her a letter all to herself, the first she had ever had. Her cheeks and eyes were bright with joy. The letters were all sorts of shapes and sizes, and the lines were not very straight, but Helen thought it was beautifully written. Arthur said he was very happy *now*, and he liked his master, and he only wished Helen could see some of his schoolfellows: one he should particularly like her to know, he was sure she would love him at once—Johnnie Lowther, a big boy, who helped him with his lessons and took his part when the other boys laughed at him.

"Laugh at Arthur?" cried Helen; "I'm sure there's nothing in him to laugh at. Why, Miss May, he is so good and kind, all the boys ought to like him. Oh! you don't know how I love him." It was too long a story for him to write to his sister, but I want to tell it to you.

Some of the strong, rough boys could not understand his love of home, and made game of him, if he spoke of Helen. Once they had teased him so much and been so unkind, that he ran away from everybody, and could not help crying. Johnnie was not there to stop them. It was a half-holiday, and he missed his little friend from the play-ground, and as he wanted him to join in some game, he set off to find him. He knew it was not likely he had been kept in as a punishment, for Arthur was a good boy, so he guessed something was the matter. After a long hunt, he found him, looking very sad.

"Why, Arthur," he called out, "what has come to you? Have you got hurt, and what are you out here for all by yourself?" At first Arthur was ashamed to tell him, but Johnnie guessed part and Arthur told him the rest.

"Never mind, old fellow, it's only their

fun ; and besides, if it wasn't, you shouldn't mind so much about it. It won't do you nor Helen either any good for you to sit here crying. Come, cheer up, and come with me, it's such a splendid afternoon for a game." But Arthur could not make up his mind to go with him. He knew his eyes were red, and he was afraid the boys would laugh at him for that. Johnnie would not leave him. He sat down and comforted him.

"Look here, Arthur," he said, "you must be braver than this; why, you will never make a brave man if you show the white feather now."

"What do you mean?" said little Arthur.

"I mean running away, and being a coward because you get laughed at. They will only do it the more if they find you care about it."

"But I can't help it. They talk as if it was wicked and stupid to love Helen; I can't bear these boys! Oh! I wish I was at home again!" and tears rose in his eyes.

"Come, come, Artie, this will never do. You know it is not wrong nor foolish to love your sister. I only wish I had got a sister too, and you should see how I would love her. Tell me all about Helen. Is she older than you are, and what colour is her hair? Is it black like yours?"

Then Arthur began, and chatted about Helen till he quite forgot his little trouble, and was looking very happy. When Johnnie saw this, he said: "Now, Artie, I know you read your Bible, do you remember what our Lord Jesus said about loving our enemies?"

"Yes," answered Arthur, "He said, 'Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you.' I can't remember any more."

"Oh, well, that's enough."

Arthur's cheeks got red, as he thought of the speech he had made about not liking the boys who had been unkind to him. Johnnie saw this and said, "I know, Arthur, you won't say that any more. Now I want you not to think it. Will you try and love them? Christ would not have told us to love our enemies if we could not

do it. I daresay these boys seem like enemies to you just now. I would not talk about Helen to them—at least not to all of them."

"Oh, no! I don't mean to," interrupted Arthur.

Johnnie went on: "And think about what they do to you that is kind. If their unkind words come into your mind, try and forget them; think of something else, and do what you can to please them, and to make them love you. Remember how much Jesus Christ bore from the very people He came to do good to. Will you try and be like Him, Arthur?"

Arthur was silent a minute. Then he looked up and said, "Yes, I will try."

"Henry's kite wants a new string," said Johnnie. (Now Henry had been very rude.)

"I wonder whether you knew I have got such a capital ball of string, when you said that," said Arthur.

Johnnie laughed. "At any rate," Arthur went on, "he shall have some of it," and away he ran.

He followed Johnnie's advice all the time he was at school, and everybody was sorry when he left. His first trouble had taught him a very blessed lesson

F.

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No. III.

MARCH, 1867.

[One Penny.]



The Colley Dog, from Life by F. W. KEVL.

THE COLLEY DOG.

LITTLE do many people, who say with pride that they have a perfectly thoroughbred colley dog, know that they are only saying that they have a thoroughbred cur, or common dog; that is the meaning of the word "colley" in Gaelic. The colley is the sheep-dog, the guard of the house, and, if need be, the efficient helpmate of the poacher, and also, sometimes, of gentlemen when out deerstalking; as he has the fine scent of the bloodhound, almost the swiftness of the greyhound, and the proverbial docility of his own family. These handsome animals are fitted for the parlour by their beauty, cautious movements, and small cat-like paws, which bring in but little dirt, while they are ever ready to be taught something fresh, or to exhibit any knowledge they may have acquired. They are excellent water-dogs; learn easily to fetch and carry; and I knew a keeper who, by way of experiment, broke one in as a pointer. The dog answered perfectly as such from the moment he knew what was required of him. Indeed dogs, of almost any breed, if properly treated, will do what you wish, if you can only make it clear to them.

One day I was walking in St. John's Wood, London, when I saw a butcher-boy ring at a door, and, before entering the house, beckon a colley dog to lie down. I waited to see how the dog would behave. He never moved till the boy came out again, when he jumped about and wagged his tail to show his pleasure, but did not overwhelm him with muddy tokens of his attachment, as so many dogs will persist in doing. I talked to the boy, and he told me that the dog had followed the cart from Smithfield, where he had evidently lost his owner; the boy added that his master, Mr. S., wished to get rid of the dog, and that he was for sale. I asked the price, and, finding it very reasonable, bought him the dog there and then, and took him home with me. I put him in a yard where he could move about at will, gave him a dinner and a comfortable bed, and left him, as I thought, in safety. In the evening I wished to take him out for a walk, but

when I went to the yard I found he had been true to his name, which was "Rover," and had jumped over a high wall and gone away. I felt rather mortified, especially at my own carelessness, as I ought to have recollected how clever these dogs are at jumping the high stone walls which enclose the fields in the north, and how, looking about from them, they take a view of the country and also of the sheep they are required to collect. I went to Mr. S.'s shop to give notice of what had happened, and they told me he was rather fond of straying, and that he would be sure to come back to them. I called again later, but the dog had not come back and the shop was being shut. Between eleven and twelve at night I went once more to look for him myself, thinking he might be hanging about the neighbourhood; but in vain, there was no Rover: but just as I thought of giving up my search and returning home, I spied him, creeping like a shadow under a wall, with his head and tail drooping, and looking very much like the English version of his name—a cur. I called him; he stopped; I quietly walked up to him, and, after some maneuvering, got hold of him, and managed to tie a string round his neck; then I patted him, and the dog, seeing that I was not going to scold or punish him, wagged his tail and behaved with such confidence that I let him loose again immediately. This at once sealed the compact between us, and I was established as master for evermore: he did not even look in the direction of his old home, but gaily trotted towards my house, which he must have remembered, as all this happened very near the spot where I had bought him in the morning. If he did stray afterwards, he always knew his way back, and I had no trouble with him whatever. I had him well washed and combed, and his handsome black-and-tan coat shone like silk. His greatest fun was to watch the cats from the garden wall, and the only complaint I ever heard about him was from a neighbour, whose cat he pursued through a conservatory into the drawing-room, to the great astonishment of the lady of the house, who was not a little scared by the bushy-tailed appearance of

her pet, followed by a somewhat large, strange dog. Poor Rover had to be tied up after this, and I had no longer the pleasure of seeing him survey the enemy (*i. e.* the cats) from the garden wall. He never hurt one, and his only object seemed to be to have the pleasure of seeing them fly from him. It was great fun to see how exactly, after a time, the cats were able to measure their distance from him and his pace; as they would sit eyeing him as he came pelting along, and always managed to leave two inches between the tip of their tails and his nose. If I went to town and got on an omnibus he would follow, to the admiration of coachman and conductor, racing round and leaping up in a joyous yet discreet way in front of the horses. If he happened in the crowd to miss me, he was always home first. No greater contrast could be seen than Rover with his master and Rover sneaking home alone. In the first instance a handsome, self-confident dog, with the tip of his erect tail jauntily dancing in the air as he trotted lightly before me; in the second, a slouching cur, who looks as if he had learnt a thing or two by bitter experience among the drovers and cattle-dealers, the kicks and blows of old Smithfield, sidling along close by the houses, looking straight before him, with his tail between his legs, nobody would steal him at such a time.

A lady who stayed at our house was so delighted with his performances in the water, his skill in finding his way, and his excellence as a watch and house-dog, that I gave him to her. Unfortunately, Rover's good-nature was abused, as the lady would frequently walk to a railway station three miles distant, and send him home alone: he disliked this so much, that at last he refused to go out with her in any direction which he thought might lead to a railway-station. Another disturbance to his peace and happiness was the arrival of a number of workmen in the neighbourhood, as much building was going on: they threw stones at him, and he bit one or two of them in consequence. At this critical juncture a gentleman came to stay with Rover's mistress, and after a few days Rover attached himself

to him, and, with my consent, he was given to him, and taken to Eltham in Kent. Once more in the hands of a competent master, he would neither follow nor obey any one else. There were no railways, no workmen to disturb him; a high wall shut off the outer world from the garden in which he spent most of his time, with full liberty to scare the cats. He died in a good old age, much honoured and regretted.

"NO, P'RAPs."

A SKETCH FOR LITTLE GIRLS.

I WAS walking in the back garden belonging to a semi-detached villa the other day, when I became aware, by the musical chorus of voices, that four little girls were at play in the garden next ours—Annie, and Polly, and Kate, and Louey: but Louey was a very little girl, only six years old, scarcely able to enter into some of their games.

All at once it struck the elders of the party that they might climb over the low wall at the bottom of the garden and get away into the fields to gather king-cups, if they could only get rid of Louey, who was too little to accompany them, and yet would cry if they left her.

"How shall we do?" asked Kate.

"I know," Annie answered, "and we will not tell a story either."

"You send her away then," said Polly.

"I am going to, if you will only have patience. Louey dear," she called in a different tone, and the child came bounding to her side.

"Will you go into the house for me and fetch my large list-ball, and then by-and-bye we will play at rounders?"

"Yes," said the little one willingly, "but don't run away while I am gone."

"No,—p'raps."

The 'p'raps,' meant to express a doubt of their remaining, was spoken under her breath, but not so low but it reached my ears, for the gardens were separated only by a hedge.

"And you won't run away, Katie?"

"No,—p'raps."

"Nor you, Polly?"

"No,—p'raps."

"Then I will go and fetch the ball, and you are sure you will play as soon as I come back?"

"Yes,—p'raps."

Having perfect faith in the loudly pronounced No and Yes, and not hearing the qualifying 'p'raps,' little Louey ran upon the errand.

No sooner was she out of sight than, in a trice, they were over the wall and had crossed the first field before Louey came back to the garden.

For a long time she doubted their intention to deceive her, and peered about behind bushes and in the summer arbour to see if they had hidden themselves, so that they might laugh at her alarm.

But at length Louey, having searched every part of the garden, and called repeatedly upon their several names without receiving any answer, was obliged to believe that they had given her the slip whilst she had gone into the house good-naturedly to oblige them. She sat down upon the turf and began to sob and cry as though her little heart would break.

Dear little children, was this right upon the part of Annie, and Polly, and Kate? I do not mean the running away, but the means they took to get rid of Louey?

Annie said she would *tell* no falsehood, but had she not done what was in every respect as bad, *acted* one?

Oh! believe me, it is not alone the *words* the great Truth-lover looks at: He trieth the very hearts and reins, and will only be satisfied with those who speak the very truth from their hearts. M. S.

FISHING IN AN EAST WIND.

By the Rev. John Todd, D.D.

FISHERMEN on the great lakes of America are very particular in noting the wind before they go out. They say when the wind is south the fish bite very poorly, and when east, not at all, and that it is of no use to fish in an east wind. And they go so far even as to assert that in the winter, when they have to cut holes, and fish through the ice, they can catch more

if the wind is east! I inquired how the fish could possibly know anything about it, down at the bottom of the lake, and that, too, covered with very thick ice. The old fishermen shake their heads and say, that "all they know about it is, that the fact is so!" Do the fish, then, sympathise with the weather? and feel cross as we do, when the wind blows this way or that? Does that great overgrown trout have his times of low spirits because the wind is east, and therefore he won't bite? I have seen men who have felt the rheumatism and other pains, the twinges of bones once broken, and men who have low spirits, when the wind was in the east! Why should the wind, coming from the east over an ocean of water, depress the human body, while that which comes from the west, across a continent, enlivens the spirits and gives courage and vigour? Be this as it may, it seems as if some people never felt any wind that was not east. They are always "out of sorts," the weather is always just what they don't want. I met one of these men a while ago, a farmer, who raised all manner of crops. It was a wet day, and I said,—

"Mr. Nayling, this rain will be fine for your grass crop."

"Yes, perhaps, but it is bad for the corn and will keep it back; I don't believe we shall have half a crop."

A few days after this, when the sun was shining hot, I said,—

"Fine sun for your corn, sir."

"Yes, pretty fair, but it is awful for the rye. Rye wants cold weather."

Again, on the cold morning, I met my neighbour, and said,—

"This must be capital weather for your rye, Mr. Nayling."

"Yes, but it is the very worst weather for the corn and grass. They want heat to bring them forward."

So the man lives perpetually in an east wind. Nothing suits him, and it would be impossible for Providence to give him weather about which he would not grumble.

And many a little boy and girl seem born under this east wind. They can't study at school because their seat or



Winter Fishing in North America.

desk is not convenient, or because their books are not right, or something else is wrong. They can't be happy at play because somebody else is unfair and runs faster than they, or knocks the ball harder than they can. Their food is not such as they want at home, and the little

grumblers make trouble at home, and are shunned everywhere else. They are east-wind children.

Now, my little reader, I beg you to be careful about this grumbling, fault-finding, east-wind feeling and manner, and to try t'at it does not get into your heart.



THE THREE PENNIES.

FATHER'S given me, and Robert, and Jim, a penny," said young Tom to Arthur, whom they met on their way to Sunday-school.

"The plates are going to be held at church to-day, for the poor folk that are out of work and are starving, and mother thought we'd like to give a something," said little Jim.

"But we are not to put anything in unless we *like*," said Robert. "Father said he'd give us the pennies for us to do as we like with them; it was no use a giving unless it was *free like*. I have got mine put into two halfpennies—it seems more, somehow."

"Mine is in halfpennies too," said Tom; "and so is Jim's. I don't know but what I may put one in; I shall see what others do. I don't see as one penny can do much good."

"Oh, but, Tom, if *all* the boys give a penny it would buy a good bit of bread, wouldn't it?" said little Jim. "But I like having it in halfpennies; there will be one for morning and one for afternoon."

"Well," said Robert, "I want some string for my kite, and so do you, Jim; and so I mean to put in one halfpenny and keep the other for the string; won't you, Jim?"

"I don't know," said Jim; "we may not be able to send them a penny to get bread if we don't do it now. I can't say the words, but don't you mind what master said the other day about giving up something we liked if we wanted to help anyone?"

They had now got to the school-door, and had no more time to talk till they walked to church. Little Jim walked along with Arthur.

"I wish I had a penny to give," said Arthur.

"Wouldn't your mother give you one?" asked little Jim.

"She has not got one," said Arthur; "we haven't had sugar these two days to

save a penny for mother to put in, so there was no chance for me."

"Arthur," said little Jim, "if you like you shall have one of my halfpennies to put in; it will be all the same to *them* if you put it in or I do."

"I never did put anything in," said Arthur; "I should like it so much, only it will not be *real* giving after all; and then you want it for the afternoon."

"Oh, I don't mind that," said little Jim; "so you just take it now, and we'll come out and put 'em in together."

"Well, boys, and how about the pennies?" said the father when they got home.

"Robert and me each put a halfpenny in the plate," said Tom, "and kept the other for something we wanted."

"And little Jim, what has he done?" said the father.

"I gave 'em both," said the boy, colouring.

"Did ye give them both in the morning, Jim?" said his mother; "for I came out behind you, and you did not put anything in this afternoon."

Little Jim turned very red, and began stammering.

"Speak out, boy," said his father; "don't be afraid. Speak the truth; I'll not be vexed if you did not give both, though it would have been like a kind little boy if you gave it all."

"Father," said the boy, "Arthur wanted to put something in, and so I let him put one halfpenny in. It wasn't wrong, was it?"

"No, my boy," said the father, patting him on the head; "it was kind of you to do so. I know you would have *liked* to have given them both yourself. Poor Arthur has no father to give him pennies, so it was not his fault he had not one to give himself; but if you will remind me, some day I will give you a penny for Arthur to do as he likes with. Never forget, my boys, what the Bible says: 'Do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again; and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be the children of the Highest.'"—*The Cottager*.

SCENES IN THE LIFE OF ST. PETER.

ST. PETER WALKING ON THE SEA.



St. Matt. xiv. 22-33. St. Mark. vi. 45-52. St. John, vi. 14-21.

THE Sea of Tiberias,' is better described by its name the 'Lake of Gennesareth,' for it is only a few miles across, and as the traveller stands on the hills that surround it, he can easily see the whole of it lying beneath him—the blue waters set in a frame of dark mountains; between these mountains there are narrow valleys that run down to the shore, and when the wind sweeps through these ravines, it causes the sudden storms, which were the dread of the fishermen of old time, and would be still, if there were many boats to go out on the lake, instead of there being only one or two at the poor little town of Tiberias.

One of the most striking scenes in the life of St. Peter took place in a storm on the Sea of Tiberias. Jesus had been teaching a vast crowd on the shore—He had wrought a great miracle (St. Matt. xiv. 15-20. St. John, vi. 1-14.), and the people wished to *take Him by force and make Him a king*. Perhaps the disciples, too, would have been glad to join them in crowning Him, but Jesus *constrained them to take ship and go to the other side of the lake*, while He Himself went up to a mountain to pray. The disciples had only a short way to go, but *the wind was contrary*, and though they *toiled in rowing, yet in the fourth watch of the night*,—between three and six in the morning—they were still *in the midst of the sea tossed with the waves*.

When they were in great fear and trouble Jesus came towards them walking on the sea. The disciples knew that no man could walk upon the sea, and so they thought that the form which they saw must be a spirit or a ghost, and they *cried out for fear*.

But Jesus calms them by saying, *Be of good cheer, it is I: Be not afraid*.

Jesus seemed as though He *would have*

passed by them, and then St. Peter, who was ever boldest and foremost of the Twelve, cried out, *Lord, if it be Thou—since it is Thyself—bid me come unto Thee on the water, and He said, Come*, and then Peter stepped from the boat on to the sea, and *walked on the water to go to Jesus*.

For a time—so long as his eye was on his Master, Peter walked safely over the waves, but soon, *when he saw the wind boisterous he was afraid, and beginning to sink, he cried, Lord, save me*. In a moment Jesus stretched forth His hand and caught him, and *said unto him, O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?*

Then he turned to the other disciples, who were looking on in wonder from their boat, and *went up with them into the ship*, taking Peter with Him.

Let us learn from this scene in the life of St. Peter the truth of what St. Paul wrote to the Philippians (iv. 13): "I can do all things through Christ that strengtheneth me."

In the sacred sign-language of Egypt, 'two feet walking on the sea' stand for a thing impossible, but what is impossible for man is possible for God; and when St. Peter had Christ to strengthen him he could walk as firmly and safely on the heaving waves as on the deck of his ship, and the child that leans on the unseen arm of Jesus and trusts in His strength, will be able to 'do all things' that are wise or right for it to do.

GOOD RESOLUTIONS.

A GIRL of six years old was a little while ago called to die. About a year before her death she had a small writing-desk given her. After her death her mother unlocked it, and found this writing; it looked like her first writing:—

"The minute I wake up in the morning I will thank God.

"I will mind my father and mother always.

"I will try to have my lessons perfect.

"I will try to be kind, and not get cross.

"I want to behave like God's child."

Five very precious rules for a little child to make his or her own. Will you make them yours?



"Peter walked safely over the waves."



CHARLIE'S LOCKET.

CHARLIE GORDON, when only six years old, was left without an earthly parent to love him. His father was a hard-working clergyman, who caught a fever whilst visiting a poor woman, and his mother died of consumption only a year afterwards. Charlie knew little of the meaning of death; every day he used to sit by his

mother's bed-side, and she would talk to him about his father who had gone away to a happy home, and she told him she was going there too, and he must come by-and-bye.

When he saw one morning all the blinds drawn down, and the house look dark and gloomy, and found his poor mother could not speak to him any more, he cried bitterly. But they told him she had gone to the happy home. Before she died she gave him a little gold locket, with a ringlet of her fair hair inside, and a piece of his father's. She said,—

"Charlie, my darling, I wish you to wear this always round your neck, and whenever you look at it think of the happy home where your dear father and mother are gone, and never do anything that you think would grieve us."

When Mrs. Gordon was buried Charlie was taken care of by an uncle and aunt, who were very fond of him, but they did not teach him to pray nor try to make him love the Saviour, Who died for us. But Charlie did not forget the prayers his mother had taught him, and he always wore the locket round his neck. One day his uncle and aunt were both out, and he unfortunately knocked over a beautiful China vase and broke it. The servant, who was very fond of him, was afraid his uncle would punish him when he came home, so she said, "Charlie, you must tell your uncle that the cat did it." Charlie dried his tears and pulled his locket out of his bosom, and looked at it for a moment, and then showed it to Mary, and said,—

"Mary, uncle must beat me for breaking his vase, for I cannot tell a lie; dear mother and father would be ashamed of me if I did, and Jesus Christ would not take me to the happy home to see them again."

This locket proved a safeguard to the little boy through life, and by often looking at it and by thinking about it he learnt to love his Heavenly Father who made the happy home; and when he grew to be a man he became a good clergyman, and taught people the way to the home he was going to himself. He lived long and did a great deal of good, and God gave him the

blessing He has promised. "Honour thy father and thy mother, that thy days may be long in the land that the Lord thy God giveth thee."

W. M.

SOMETHING ABOUT MARIE'S LETTER.

MY DEAR CHILDREN,—I read in the "Children's Prize" for December, 1866, a story of a little girl who wrote a letter last Christmas to Jesus Christ, and I should like to say something to you about it. I wonder if little Marie asked her mother if she might write that letter! Do you think she did? What would your mother say, if you wished to write to JESUS CHRIST? I think I should say, "Do not write;" and I will tell you why I should say so. We write to our friends when they are away from us, and we cannot speak to them; but when they are with us—close to us—then we speak to them, and do not write: and Jesus said to His disciples, "*Lo, I am with you always!*" And at another time He told them, "*I say unto you, that if two of you shall agree on earth as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven. For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.*"

So, dear children, Jesus is always with us, though we cannot see Him; and He hears all we say, and knows all we think, too; and we may always speak to Him, and tell Him all we wish for, as well as all that makes us sad or sorry. Jesus is God, and

"God is so good that He will hear
Whenever children humbly pray;
And always lends a willing ear
To what the youngest child may say."

Perhaps, if you read little Marie's letter you thought it a very strange prayer,—if you thought it was prayer at all; but that little girl asked JESUS for what she wanted, and that is prayer. Ah, my children, when you "say your prayers," do you ask JESUS for what you want, or do you ever really care whether God gives you what you ask for? Marie prayed for others, too,—she asked for something or her brother, and

sister, and mother ; she did not think only of what she wished for herself.

Little Selma and Curt put their names at the end of their sister's letter. Why did they do so ? Because they both wanted Jesus to do what Marie had asked Him to do. Do you think of that when you say "Amen," at the end of a prayer at home, at school, or at church ? *Amen* means "So be it," or "May it be so ;" and when some one else says a prayer, and you say "Amen," it is like the little boy and girl, writing their names at the end of their sister's letter, and means that you wish God to do what the other person has asked Him to do. But if you have not been listening, and do not know what has been asked for, you cannot wish God to do it, and then it is only mocking God to say "Amen." God always knows if we mean what we say.

The three children, who all put their names to the letter, had agreed what they should ask for, and Jesus sent it them, by putting it into the hearts of the lady and gentleman to take them the things they wished. Does not that remind you of the promise Jesus had made ? Perhaps some of you think those little children prayed for foolish things ; if you think so, then ask God to teach you what to pray for. The Bible tells us all that "*we know not what we should pray for as we ought ;*" and because we do not know, God will give us His Holy Spirit to teach us and help us, if we ask Him to do so. The disciples said to Jesus, "*Lord, teach us to pray.*" And Jesus did teach them,—and He will teach you, too, if you ask Him.

There is one thing more I wish to say about Marie's letter, and then I will finish mine. She said, "I am a good child, and shall be very obedient to my mother." Poor little Marie ! Did she think Jesus would answer her prayer because she was a good child ? I hope you do not think that your prayers will be answered *because* you are good. We are none of us good enough to deserve that God should do anything for us ; so when we pray, we should always ask God to hear us "*for JESUS CHRIST's sake,*"—that means, because JESUS CHRIST is so good, and because

He has died for us upon the cross. We do not look for an answer to our prayer because we are good ourselves. But we should ask Jesus to give us His Holy Spirit to teach us how He loves us, and to help us to love Him, and try to be good, that we may please Him who is so kind to us.

That God may bless this letter, so that it may teach some children to pray aright, is the wish and prayer of one who reads and values the "Children's Prize."

H.

SAVED !

AT the close of a sultry day, such as we can hardly imagine in this country, a missionary sat under his verandah. He was tired and very sad, for it grieved him to see that, while the good God lived and reigned to bless His creatures like a loving father, there were so many who worshipped idols, and practised all kinds of evil to please them. "But," thought he, "though man cannot persuade them to give up their folly and wickedness, God can do all things." And the good man sent up an earnest prayer that it would please Him to send light to these poor misguided people.

The words had scarcely been uttered before two figures stood before him. A heathen father led his little son forward, and at once told him the trouble that was in his mind.

"The gods," he said, "were angry, and would not be pleased till some sacrifice was made ; therefore the priests had commanded that several children should be offered up, and amongst the rest his only little boy was to be thrown into the river the next day."

The poor man had no doubt that the priests were right, and he did not hesitate to give up his child ; but he loved him very dearly, and he had heard from somebody that the missionaries knew of a place where little children lived in happiness after they died here, and he had come to ask if the good man could get his little one in there, after the deep cold river had swept him away, that he might be safe



A Young Brahmin's Visit to a Missionary.

from all trouble ; and he offered all the riches he possessed for the boon.

Then the missionary told him of the Heaven which the God of gods had prepared for all who love Him, old and young, and which Jesus Christ had already paid for with His own precious life ; and that the real true God *loved him* and his little boy, and wished them to live on the beautiful earth where He had placed them till *He sent* death to them. All this was different to what the heathen father had ever known of a god before ; and when he was told of One who did not wish him to drown his dear little boy, he said, "I will give my son to thy good God."

The next day when the offering was to be made, and all the wretched parents had brought their poor children to the terrible river, this heathen father stepped resolutely up to the old priest, and told him that he would not drown his son, for he should keep him for the good God. The wicked priest was very angry, for he was afraid that other parents would do the same, and that they might refuse to bring him all the presents he received for keeping the gods from hurting them. So he raised his voice and

asked the gods to send every sort of trouble and sorrow to the little boy and his father ; and all the poor people thought that they surely would. But the happy father did not mind his words. God had made him feel sure that what the missionary had told him was true ; and, though he knew that he must give up all his friends, and his riches, if he changed his religion, he kept to his resolve ; and his little son grew up to be a good Christian man and a comfort to him in his old age.

GOOD FOR EVIL.

A GENTLEMAN was one day riding in a part of the country entirely new to him ; he took a wrong turn, and lost his way. It was a lonely place, and he looked around in vain for some house, or any human being, of whom he might inquire. At length he saw before him a man, walking slowly, as if very tired. Spurring his horse, he soon came up with him, and gained the information he required. After directing him, the poor man said,—

"I am not used to beg, sir, but I have been walking all day, and should be very



thankful for a trifle to get something to eat on the road."

But the gentleman said that he never gave to strangers, there were so many impostors; and he rode quickly forward without giving another thought to the poor man, whom he left toiling wearily along the hot road.

The poor man was very angry, and said to himself, "I wish he would lose his way again; he might find somebody else to direct him." And he walked on and on towards the end of his journey. "When I come to the 'Two Swans' there will only be two miles," he said, "and then, rest at home." As he was passing the little country inn, which he had named, the landlady, seeing his tired look, called him in, and gave him some bread and cheese and cider. Refreshed and thankful, he went gladly on his way, and thinking of his hasty wish about the gentleman, he said, "I don't wish him any harm; after all, he didn't know me as Mrs. Jones does. There's one comfort, I am *not* an impostor, though we are poor; and if they make little Jack well again at the hospital, I shan't mind these long walks every week to see him."

The two miles beyond the inn were almost passed, when the poor man was startled by seeing a horse come trotting towards him with saddle and bridle, but without a rider. He caught the bridle, and led the animal back, expecting every moment to meet the rider, but before long he saw the gentleman who had spoken to him on the road, lying apparently lifeless under the hedge. He quickly fastened the horse to a tree, and then went to its master, and did all he could to restore him to consciousness; but for some time his efforts failed. At length, however, he opened his eyes, but when he tried to move, they found that his leg was broken. The poor man's cottage was the nearest dwelling, and there the gentleman was taken. It was many weeks before he could be moved, but when he recovered he showed his gratitude to the poor man and his wife, by settling on them a sum of money, which placed them above want for their lives, and by having their children so educated that they were able to provide for themselves. He felt that if the poor man had followed his example of refusing help to those in need, he might have been left on the road to die, notwithstanding all his riches.

THE MOTHER'S STORY.

(Continued from page 21.)

CHAPTER V.



THE next day, in the twilight hour, before the farm-house tea, mother went on with her story.

"It was in the summer once, nine months after we were engaged, that your father came to me full of trouble, and said, 'What shall I do, Maggie? My mother is losing her health day by day, seeming thinner and paler every time I look at her; and all the doctor says, because she wants a little change and country air,—at least, that is most likely to set her up again. And how am I to manage?' Poor fellow, I couldn't tell him! She really was very ill,—so ill that a kind neighbour had to remain with her day and night. My aunt, who had kept house for us since my mother died, used to take me to see her often. And when I saw her, and grew to know her, I wondered less how it happened that he was so different to other sons. And, if possible, I loved him as well again when I saw how careful and tender over her he was; how he used to carry her up-stairs and down, and wait upon her, just like any girl, only better. I never saw anything like the way he clung to her. And when this question of change of air was proposed he left no plan unthought of, possible or impossible, rather than deprive her of its benefit. He used to talk to me about it whenever I saw him, and say, 'What shall I do, Maggie?' It was rather awkward to advise him, for I knew he had no country friends, and it would have been hard for him just then to turn out of town himself. But while he was wondering what he should do, and just as he had begun seriously to think of giving up his situation and looking for one in the country, an unexpected event settled the matter for him. Going to the office one day, he was called aside by his master, who had a letter in his hand, and, to his great surprise and joy, this proposal was made to him. 'I have just heard

from my brother-in-law, William, a large landowner in Norfolk. He is in some difficulty, for his steward has absconded, and left his affairs in a great mess. Now he wants some one to go there for awhile and help to set them straight, for he is an old man, and not able to see about such things himself. He knows of no one sufficiently capable and trustworthy but you, and he writes to ask me if I will spare you. What do you say?' At first your father was too surprised to answer, and then he said, still in the greatest wonderment, 'The gentleman cannot know me, sir; or even if he did he would know that I am town-bred, and understand nothing of farms or matters of that sort.' His master only laughed, and made answer, 'As to your first objection, William, I can assure you he knows you as well as I do, or nearly; and concerning the second, he has the idea that you can do anything you set about. He thinks he can himself put you in the way of seeing how the business stands, and he is satisfied to leave the rest to your discretion. And,' he added, kindly, 'I am anxious you should go for your mother's sake, as well as your own. When once you get there you mayn't want to come back again, but if you do I will always have you.' I think none of the rewards his uprightness and honesty had gained him were ever so sweet as this, Willie. And how do you suppose he felt when he knew that his master's relative was the very Mr. Dale from whose house his mother married, and that he was going to take her back to her native village? That same night he started for Norfolk, coming back next day with a bright face enough. He had found Mr. Dale the pleasantest old gentleman possible; had hired rooms for himself and his mother close by his house; and had been so far enlightened into the business required of him that he thought he should quite well manage it; and altogether was as happy as could be,—happier than I was, who was dreading to let him go. Ah, Willie, he had something behind that,—something he knew, but wouldn't tell me then! Mr. Dale had promised, if he suited him, to make him steward of his estates,

with a salary of four hundred pounds a-year. That was what his master meant when he said, 'You mayn't want to come back again.' For he had lately been visiting his brother-in-law, while casting about in his mind how he might help on this energetic young fellow, who wanted to get married and was not rich enough. And in such fashion did kind-hearted old Mr. Dale take up the cause.

"Well, into Norfolk they went, he and his mother, and sure enough they didn't want to come back again. The home air seemed like new life to grandmother, and father managed to work and study himself into a good farmer and overseer in a very short space of time. What interest he took in it! No one could accuse him of knowing nothing of farming matters by the time he was made steward for Mr. Dale, for he had mastered it all by his clear, sensible head, and his indefatigable industry. He always says now to any of his young friends, 'Don't take to farming unless you have been bred to it; there is too much to learn in a hurry.' That is good advice, Willie; but as for himself, before the period of his stewardship was at an end—not more than two years—he had become one of the best farmers in Norfolk. When we remind him of that he always says, 'A man can do most things by trying.'

"But I am going on too fast. You remember I told you he left me in London, and I did not know that he had so good a prospect before him?"

"Yes, mother. Why didn't he tell you?"

"Because he was not certain of being steward. He meant to try hard for the situation, and that with him is generally to succeed; but he would not risk disappointing me. Then I think he wanted to give me a little surprise when the time came.

"I missed him very much. He used to write pretty often, but that was not like having him to talk to. My father was away all day, and my aunt was not like either my mother or Amy. Besides, I was missing Amy too; and I was very lonely. But after a month or so my father gave me some idea of the truth. I was making tea for him alone one night, and, remarking how pleasant and cosy it was for us so

to be together, he said, 'I expect William won't let me keep you much longer. They'll be taking my little girl away from me soon.' And the day after he called me aside to say, 'Better be getting your things together ready, hadn't you? Your aunt will take you into the city any day you like. Buy all you want,—a full outfit, you know. I can afford it, Maggie' (seeing that I hesitated a little); 'I have only you to buy for, dear.' And accordingly my aunt and I went shopping for a good many days, and I began to feel very bright and happy when we set to work, to get my outfit made up. And it was rather a large concern; we had business enough on hand to occupy me for many months.

"Autumn was merging into winter when my wedding-day came. It was mild and quiet, quite a golden day; and in the evening we journeyed out of the great city, and went to spend a holiday month by the sea. It was a happy month, indeed, but scarcely happier than many which have come and gone since. And when the wind began to blow keen and cold, and the shore was bleak and deserted, we started off to our country home. We reached it quite late, long after darkness had set in; but it was not too dark for me to see all he had done there for my comfort and pleasure. And there was a blazing fire and a substantial tea ready for us; the tidy little maid-servant on the doorstep waiting to take my wrappers, and grandmother just in the hall, eager to welcome me to my pretty home, and to be my mother as well as his.

CHAPTER VI.

"I was very happy in my new home. All this richly-wooded country round us, though I saw it first in its wintry nakedness, was like a lovely picture to me, that I was never tired of looking at. And the dear little church on the sunny slope, with its grey-haired pastor whom every one loved, and its mingled worshippers, seemed so peaceful and quiet. The very sound of the bells, chiming out over the village day by day, without the hoarse roar and din of crowded city streets, was so sweet to my ears that I



He used to wait upon her just like any girl."

always paused to listen to them. I soon became at home in the place, and friendly with my neighbours; and soon found, too, that Amy had not mistaken my husband's character. Oh, Willie, how high his name has stood here ever since he came! It

was not, in the beginning, because he was well-born or rich, for he wasn't; it was because everybody, good or bad, honoured him for his manly courage in fighting his way—in doing his duty.

(Concluded in our next.)

THE CHILDREN'S PRIZE

No. IV.]

APRIL, 1867.

[One Penny.



The Fooliah Clicken, from Life by F. W. KEEL.

THE FOOLISH CHICKEN.

THERE was a round pond, and a pretty pond too;
About it white daisies and buttercups grew,
And dark weeping willows, that stooped to the ground,
Dipped in their long branches, and shaded it round.

A party of ducks to this pond would repair,
And feast on the green water-weeds that grew there;

Indeed the assembly would frequently meet
To talk over affairs in this pleasant retreat.

One day a young chicken who lived thereabout,
Stood watching to see the ducks pass in and out,

Now standing tail upward, now diving below—
Chick thought of all things she should like to do so.

So this foolish chicken began to declare,
"I've really a great mind to venture in there;
My mother's oft told me I must not go nigh,
But really, for my part, I cannot tell why.

"Ducks have feathers and wings, and so have I too,
And my feet—what's the reason that they will not do?

Though my beak is pointed, and their beaks are round,

Is that any reason that I should be drowned?

"So why should not I swim as well as a duck?
Suppose that I venture, and just try my luck;
For," said she, spite all that her mother had taught her,

"I'm really remarkably fond of the water."

So into the pond this young chicken she flew,
And soon found that her dear mother's cautions were true;

She splashed, and she dashed, and she turned herself round,
And heartily wished herself safe on the ground.

But now 'twas too late to begin to repent:
The harder she struggled, the deeper she went;
And when every effort she vainly had tried,
She slowly sank down to the bottom and died.

The ducks, I perceived, began loudly to quack,
When they saw the poor fowl floating dead on her back,

And by their grave looks they seemed to be saying.

That this was what came of a chick's disobeying.

THE MOTHER'S STORY.

(Concluded from page 48.)

PEOPLE often earn for themselves the honour of being rich by hard-bargaining and oppressing the poor, and by scraping and hoarding at every point. But I have never seen such men with the joyous, contented spirit, and the happy face, and the light heart, that your father carries about with him. It is right to be saving and careful; but a blessing never rests upon earthly riches unless they are used as a loan from Heaven,—which, indeed, they are. Your father has cared for the poor,—has given freely of what he has so freely received to the Lord Jesus in the persons of His needy ones, and he has never been the poorer himself for doing so. Indeed, I never heard of any one laying up treasure in heaven, and thereby having less of comfort and blessing left to them on earth."

"I say, mother," said Willie, "there ain't many like him, I should think!"

"Very likely there are, Willie; we don't know."

The boy shook his head doubtfully.

"Well, mother, go on, please. What next?"

"The next thing of much importance was the birth of this little boy on my lap. Such a dear petted baby, with blinking blue eyes and mischievous hands, and a troublesome way of waking up and crying in the middle of the night when he ought to be fast asleep. And then the next thing to that your father resigned his stewardship of Mr. Dale's property, and hired a farm of him, at his especial request. He had it upon easy terms, and so good and careful a farmer did he turn out that Mr. Dale pressed him to take another. In due time he had three, all large ones; and he worked them with an energy, and forethought, and prudence, that brought him most wonderful success. Two of them are his own now; and this house, where we live, is his also. Ah, he says truly that a man can do most things by trying! When one works as he has worked, so heartily and honestly in God's sight, using the Master's talents

against the day of account, there generally follows prosperity in this world, as well as happiness eternal in the world to come."

"Is that all, mother?"

"Yes, dear, that's all."

CHAPTER VII.

Some years have come and gone since 'mother' related this little story.

In thought I am standing by the white gates of that pleasant old farm-house on a sunny October morning. I can hear the crack of a fowling-piece every now and then, and the whirr of a pheasant overhead, and the bell-like notes of the Squire's dogs in the fields and woods near at hand,—but no other sound. How calm and peaceful it is! The sky is blue all over; not a single white feather is to be seen trailing across it. The landscape is gorgeous with tints of purple and crimson, brown and gold; and the tender summer green mingles with it here and there, as though Nature was unwilling to strip it quite off. There stands the homestead, with its clustering barns and outbuildings, not a hundred paces from the gate on which I am leaning. There is the sunny porch, where 'mother' used to sit and sew in the long warm evenings; and there, too, are the broad windows of the tea-room, where the story was told, with the huge elm-tree overshadowing them. I can see the firelight flickering across those windows, as it used to do in the old days; I could almost fancy I saw Maggie's own shadow there. But Maggie is gone, and the farm-house has a new mistress.

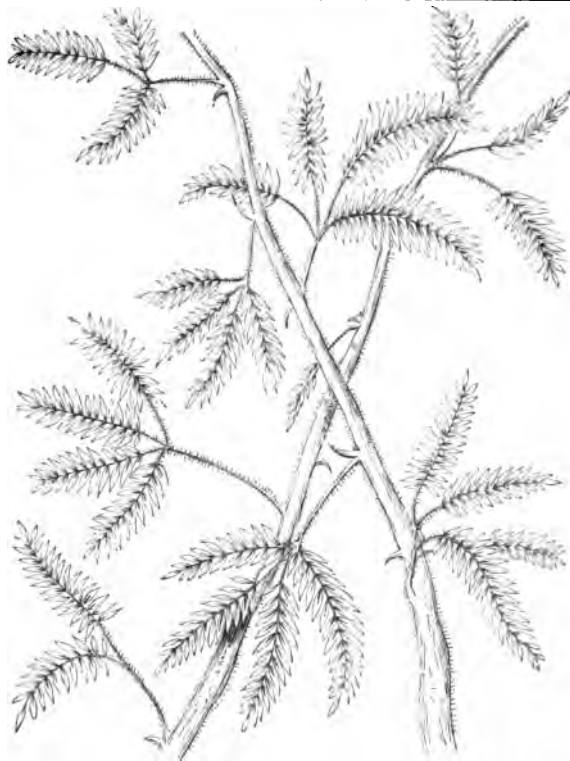
And there stands the church—the dear little grey church—on its velvet slope, with its gable crosses and its tall spire, in no way altered from what it used to be. It shelters a few more graves, that is all. There, too, is the ivy-covered Rectory, with its well-known twisted chimneys, and its girdle of shrubbery, just the same as I always remember it,—just the same, except that one never sees there now the face of the white-haired clergyman, 'whom every one loved.'

But where am I to look for Maggie's home?

Nestling in the rich landscape, a mile

or two beyond me, stands the grand old mansion, with its score of gables and its massive grey walls, that for many generations has been the seat of the Dale family. There are no Dales left to preside over it now: a new house is founded—a new name,—one that will, we doubt not, become equally honourable in the future history of the county. There it stands, in its wide-sweeping park and its rich belts of woodland, with its gardens and its preserves, its outlying farms and clustering cottages, its well-appointed stables and timid herds of deer. And in that noble old place Willie's mother is mistress.

I stand and look at it from my post at the white gates, and as I look I see a little speck issuing from the park into the broad high-road. A little speck! It is a neat open carriage. Soon I see two gentlemen on horseback trying to overtake it; and, as the whole party come into fuller view, I begin to stroll leisurely along the foot-path. Louder and louder grows the clatter of hoofs upon the hard road; and now I can distinguish voices. As the carriage whirls past I raise my head to bow to the ladies. Ah, there is Maggie—pretty, gentle, loveable Maggie—wrapped in a heavy cloak, bordered with furs, to protect her from the sharp air! (It is sometimes hinted that the Squire's lady is not so strong as she might be,—resembles too much a beautiful elder sister who died in decline.) Beside her sits 'grandmother,' smiling and complacent. Silvery white is her hair now, and her forehead is becoming deeply furrowed; but hers is a calm and peaceful old age, upon which the finger of care hardly touches. Opposite both is a sunny-haired girl of twelve, whose glowing face, beneath the shadow of her hat, smiles down upon me as she goes by. It is Maggie's eldest daughter. And beside this pretty child a young lady is sitting, leaning forward and chatting to the elder ones. She is not a member of the family, but it is popularly supposed that she will be before very long. Our old friend Wilke, now grown to man's estate, rides by that side of the carriage where she is seated; and he seems very proud of the said young lady, and very fond of her too.



And on the other side rides the Squire himself. Older and graver he has grown, and a sprinkling of grey hair is visible as he raises his hat; but none of the kindliness has faded from his face,—none of the old bright earnestness. I think of the little London garret—of the struggling boyhood; I glance up for a moment at that frank, manly face; and then my eyes wander back to the old gabled mansion, and the rich masses of woodland around it. “Truly,” I say to myself, “a man can do most things by trying.”

THE SENSITIVE PLANT.

ONE of the most curious little plants which grow in the gardens of the South is the “sensitive plant.” It has long thin stems, with small leaves growing

out on both sides, and it bears modest pink flowers.

What makes it curious, is, that it seems to *feel*. If you touch it, the leaves shut up and it lies down; therefore it is called “the sensitive plant.” It cannot bear to be handled. It acts as much as to say, “You hurt me; I shrink from your rude touch.” It is a delicate plant, and God gave it this shrinking nature to keep it from being injured.

If you keep touching it, it loses for a time this power, and does not seem to care.

Now, my children, do you know that in the garden of your heart God has put a little sensitive plant? You do not know it by that name, perhaps, but you will know what it is when I tell you it is *conscience*. If properly cultivated it will shrink from the very touch of evil. It will say, and *immediately*, “Be off!—quit me!—I don’t wish to have anything to do with you; you will only injure.” Such a conscience, is a great blessing to anybody. It will keep one out of harm’s way. A boy or a girl who has that, and *minds* it, will go straight. Bad companions can never lead them astray.

There is a danger, however, of conscience losing its sensitiveness. If you should come in contact with evil too often—that is, if you allow yourself to see or hear what is wrong, or to go at all with bad companions, or put yourself in the way of temptation, conscience will become *insensible*; it will get into the habit of not feeling, nor caring—which is very dangerous, because then a child may go very far astray, almost without knowing it.

Take good care, then, children, of this precious plant. God put it in your bosom to warn you of the approach of sin. Let nobody tamper with it. Keep it tender, you will ever have reason to bless God for its faithful cautions.



A WILD GOOSE CHASE.

By the Rev. John Horden, Missionary at Moose Fort,
N. W. America.

SO April has come again; the showers are falling, nature is reviving; the fields and hedges appear green and bright, scarcely a mark of winter remains; but let us take a peep at what is now going on in a distant land; let us go out again in imagination to Moose Fort: there is no grass to be seen there, the country is still covered with snow, but the cold is not so intense as it was in January and February. What are the people thinking about? they must be expecting something, for they are all very busy, evidently preparing for some great event. Most of them

are cleaning their guns and seeing that they are all in good order; some I see are chopping out blocks of wood in shape like the bodies of geese; others have large bundles of birch-twigs by their side, and have made up some in such a way that they look at a distance like actual geese: whatever can they be about? Well, it is just this. They are expecting the Canadian and Wavy geese, so they wish to give them a warm reception.

As soon as even a single goose has been seen, every one gets excited, and all who can get away for a few days set off as soon as possible: let us go with one of the men. Here he is with a small sledge; he has packed thereon all his decoy geese, his blankets, kettles, food, &c., and taking his

gun on his shoulder sets off; having arrived at a suitable spot he collects a quantity of snow, ice, and willows, with those materials he builds a circular "stand," about two feet six inches in height; he then places the decoy geese in front of it, and then sits down in it with his loaded gun by his side. By-and-bye a flock of geese is seen; he sits perfectly still, and the poor geese, seeing the decoys, fancy they are real geese, and come to settle down among them. When bang, bang go the barrels of his gun, and down fall some of the flock, the rest fly off in terror; but he has not yet done; he begins to call, imitating to perfection the cry of the goose; they, poor silly creatures, after making a long circuit in the air, return to the fatal spot, and there leave a few more of their number; but even geese learn by experience, and it is but seldom that they will return a third time. Sometimes a man will kill a large number in the course of a day, while at other times he will wait and wait, almost starved by the cold, without killing one.

Suppose a hunter were to see a goose and a gander flying towards him, he knows the one from the other by their size; he cannot perhaps shoot both at once; the question is, which shall he shoot first so as to get both? Now you ought to think a little before you read any farther. Bang goes the gun; down falls the goose; the gander, seeing his mate fall, hovers over her, ready to lend any assistance in his power, but his affection costs him his life, for another shot brings him down likewise. But should the hunter by mistake shoot the gander first, he has no such chance of the goose; for I am sorry to say that she does not even look behind her to see what has become of him!

I dare say some of you think you would like to have a day or two's shooting. But I assure you it is not particularly pleasant, for the cold is too great, and the scene is too cheerless: but the people at Moose are obliged to engage in it, for about April all their winter supplies of animal food have failed, and they look forward to the arrival of the geese as a chance of filling their larder again.

SCENES IN THE LIFE OF ST. PETER.

THE TRANSFIGURATION.

St. Matt. xvii. 1-5; St. Luke, ix. 28-37.



MOST of the scenes in the life of St. Peter were earthly, but this one was heavenly. Jesus called Peter and James and John, and took them up into a high mountain apart, and while He prayed He was transfigured before them—that is, a great change passed over Him, and He did not look as they were used to see Him; for now His face did shine as the sun, and His raiment was white as the light.

Peter and James and John were heavy with sleep, for the sight was too much for them to bear: but when they were awake they saw His glory, and He gave them power to look upon it. Then they saw also two men that stood with Him. Who were these, and how came they to be with Jesus on the summit of Mount Tabor? for there this scene is commonly believed to have taken place. They were Moses and Elias, which appeared in glory.

These two holy men had left this world long before. Moses had died on Mount Pisgah, and the Lord Himself had buried him, and no man knew where his grave was; and Elijah had been taken to heaven in a chariot of fire many years after the death of Moses. They had long been in Paradise, but now in glorified bodies they were sent to talk with Jesus upon earth.

And why were these two sent of all the saints in heaven? Moses was sent because he was the man who had given that law which Jesus came to replace by a better, and Elijah was the chief of all the prophets who had heralded the Saviour's coming. So the great Lawgiver and the great Prophet were sent as if to give up their offices to Jesus. They disappear, while He remains.

How this sight of the glory of the faithful ones in heaven must have nerved the apostles for their coming trials, and how it must have strengthened their faith in

the teaching of their Master! We know that St. Peter felt this, for in his second letter to the churches he writes about this Transfiguration-scene, *'We have not followed cunningly-devised fables when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eye-witnesses of His majesty, for He received from God the Father honour and glory, when there came such a voice from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.'* (2 Pet. i. 16, 17.)

While Moses and Elias talked with Jesus on the Mount of Transfiguration, *they spake of His decease which He should accomplish at Jerusalem.* This was not a new subject to them; the sacrifices of the law of Moses, especially the Passover Lamb, all were pictures beforehand of this death,—the words of Elijah, and all the prophets, witnessed of this death; and now that Jesus, the true Lamb, was soon to be offered up, Moses and Elias were suffered to come and rejoice with Him.

But not for long. Soon the glorious scene began to fade from before the eyes of the three chosen witnesses, and as the heavenly visitors departed from Him Peter said unto Jesus, *Lord, it is good for us to be here, and let us make three tabernacles, one for Thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias.* Perhaps St. Peter was thinking that this splendour was the beginning of the reign of Jesus as a king on earth; and so, *not knowing what he said*, he proposed that they should make booths of branches, to serve till palaces could be built. But when the vision had fulfilled the purpose for which God allowed it, even while Peter was yet speaking, *a bright cloud overshadowed them*, and the apostles feared as they entered into the cloud, and out of the cloud there came the voice of God, saying, *This is my beloved Son, hear Him.* When the disciples heard it they fell on their faces, and were sore afraid, and Jesus touched them and said, *Arise, and be not afraid.* And when they had lifted up their eyes they saw no man, save Jesus only. Moses and Elias were gone back to Paradise, and Jesus was no longer shining in glory, but He was

as He had been before His transfiguration.

Let all children who read this learn one of the lessons which this scene in St. Peter's life teaches. It shows that in heaven they live whom men call dead. At the summons of God, Moses and Elias—changed and glorified—but still the same *two men*, came back to earth and knew each other, and talked of that in which they both rejoiced. What comfort is here for any whose dear ones have died! They may learn from the transfiguration, that they will hereafter see and know those dear ones, and they may say, as King David did, who plainly expected to see and to know his child in heaven,—*"I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me."* (2 Sam. vii. 23.)

TITUS AND HIS FAMILY.

From the German, by James F. Cobb, Esq.

MANY hundred years ago, there lived in a distant part of the vast Roman Empire, a good and noble man, named Titus. Some years before his birth, the light of the blessed Gospel of Jesus Christ had dawned upon that benighted land; pious men had preached the good tidings of salvation, and thousands had given ear to their words and been baptized.

Titus, who had received this name in Holy Baptism, was a Christian, and together with his family found his greatest happiness through faith in God and Jesus Christ. But the heathen priests, who feared to lose their power and wealth, sought to persuade the rulers of the country to root out the Christian religion. A cruel decree, therefore, went forth from the King to execute all who would not renounce their faith in Christ.

Titus was one of the first on whom the King turned his attention; he thought, If I succeed in making this man, whom the Christians hold in such respect, forsake Christianity, all the other Christians will soon follow his example. So he sent for Titus to his palace, and used all his eloquence in trying to make him turn away from the faith in Christ. When all his flatteries and promises were in vain, the King threatened to have him tortured



The Transfiguration.



"I led him to the fire."

to death in the most fearful manner. But Titus remained firm. "I am ready," he said, "to shed my blood and sacrifice my life, for thee, oh my king; but I am still more ready and willing to die for my Master and my Saviour. Death to us Christians is the entrance to eternal life."

The King exclaimed, "Very well, as you do not fear death, I will find more effectual means to compel you to give up your new religion," and he motioned him to depart.

Titus had three children. Simon, the eldest son, was just sixteen years old; Martina, the daughter, was fourteen; and Mathias, the youngest boy, had not yet attained his ninth year. Titus and his like-minded wife had taken pains to teach these children the Christian religion.

On the following day, while parents and children were engaged in their family worship, one of the King's captains entered the room and said to Titus, "I have an order to take away thy youngest son; if he will not renounce his faith, this very hour he shall be burned alive in the court-yard of the palace."

The father was terrified, the mother turned pale as death. They grieved not so much because their noble boy was to perish in the flames, but rather because they feared that at the sight of the fire he would be frightened and deny his faith.

"Oh, my child," said the father to him, "think of that holy old man, Polycarp, of whom I have often told you; you know that when he was required to deny Christ, or else to be burned, he answered, 'I have now served Him eighty-six years, and He has done me no evil; how, then, can I blaspheme my Lord and Saviour?' He then went willingly to the fire. Think, my child, what a good Master He must be for whom, after a service of eighty-six years, one would suffer a fiery death. Do with joy, as a child, what Polycarp did, as an old man!"

His mother, too, said through her tears, "Yes, my dearest child, have pity upon me, and go readily to death."

Then the boy exclaimed, "Oh, mother, do not weep! I do not fear death. For Jesus Christ our Lord I will cheerfully yield up my life."

The captain said, "Cruel father! Unmerciful mother! Do what the King wishes and your boy is saved. You are yourselves giving him up to death."

The father and mother replied, "Do you not think it is hard for us to be separated from the dear child?" But to the boy they said, "Go, beloved son! God be with thee; the short pain will bring to thee eternal joy."

The boy went, holding the soldier's hand. All gazed after him, till he had entered the court-yard of the royal palace, and the door was shut behind him. The court-yard was surrounded by a lofty wall. Many sad looks were turned towards it.

"Oh, God!" exclaimed the mother; "Now the smoke is rising up—now they are burning him!"

The father thought of Abraham, looked up to heaven, and said, "To thee, oh God, may he be as acceptable as a burnt-offering." All fell down upon their knees and prayed, as if they knelt round an altar of sacrifice.

Morning dawn found father and mother and their two remaining children in tears, after a sleepless night. It was not long before the captain again entered the room. "I am come," he said to the parents, "to take away your daughter. But do not you," he said, as he turned to the daughter, "be so foolish as your brother. See, the King is ready to adorn you with gold and pearls."

Martina replied, "What use are gold and pearls to me? 'What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?'"

"Well, then," said the captain, "I cannot hide it from you, you are to be thrown to savage wild beasts, and by them to be torn and devoured."

Father, mother, and brother, weeping and sobbing, embraced the young martyr. But she tore herself from them, and exclaimed, "Father, mother, brother, weep no more! Rejoice with me: I seem to see the gates of heaven already open. There we shall meet again; there we shall be for ever with Christ in bliss." The captain led her away, and the soldiers who guarded the house prevented the sorrowing parents and brother from following her.

On the morning of the third day the captain again appeared. "I am here," said he, "to demand your remaining son. You have still time to come to a better mind. Reflect well before you give him up to me. Do you really wish to be robbed of all your children? Will you, hard-hearted parents, through your obstinacy deliver him up to a bloody death? Look at him, the strong and handsome youth. He is the only one of your children left to you. He is the desire of your eyes, the comfort of your life, the support of your old age. Persuade him, that in love and gratitude to you, he may preserve his life for your benefit, and submit to the royal commands. We have the power to prepare a terrible death for him."

The noble youth replied, "You could have no power at all over me if it were not given you from above; you can do nothing against me except what God permits you. And shall I not willingly drink the cup which my Father in heaven gives me? His beloved Son died for all mankind. Oh, it is sweet to yield one's life out of love to Him Who gave His life for us! Yes—to die for Him!"

"Without doubt, then," said the captain, "the King will have thee crucified. It will not be so pleasant, with pierced hands and feet, to hang many days on the cross—to endure the pain of burning wounds—and to die in agony."

The heroic youth said, "What a joy it is for me that I am accounted worthy to die by the same death as my Redeemer suffered! I shall endeavour to follow His blessed example till with Him I can say—'It is finished.'"

"My beloved son," said his father, "God will strengthen thee, that thou mayest endure even to the end."

With clasped hands the son looked silently up to heaven, quickly embraced his father and mother, and with firm step walked out of the house, the captain following him.

Titus and his wife watched through the night in prayer, comforted and encouraged each other; and as the morning dawned they expected death every hour. At last the captain came.

"Noble lady," he said to Maria, "I come to call thee to the King. Thou, like thy husband, hast not had compassion upon thy children; now, I entreat thee, have compassion upon thyself. Truly do I grieve that thy head should fall beneath the axe, for this is the manner of death appointed to thee."

Maria took her veil to put it on her, and said, "Dearest husband, now as I depart from you, and go away to die, I will not say farewell to you. I feel, as I go into that other world, only as if I was going across the street into another house; indeed, only as if I was going into the next room, whither you will soon follow me! Death separates us here only for a little while; but it unites us and our children there above with Christ, with the holy apostles, and with all good people—for ever! Why should we sorrow at this?"

She hastened out of the room,—the captain accompanied her.

Before an hour had passed, the captain returned, and said, "Titus, the King summons thee before him."

The captain led Titus into the Royal Chamber. The King stood near a table upon which splendid garments of silk and purple, silver vessels, golden vases, jewels, and pearls, were laid out. Titus made obeisance to the King, but cast upon all these treasures only a glance of contempt.

The King said, "Such things are I know nothing to thee. All thy children have scorned them. But come with me; I will show thee better treasures."

Titus replied, "Do not give yourself useless trouble, O King, lead me rather to the stake, and to those blood-besprinkled places where my wife and my children have suffered. I wish nothing more of this world. All the most glorious things which thou canst show me in this world, I esteem as nothing."

The King said, "Come and see." He opened a door, and told him to go in.

Titus entered a splendid hall, but instantly he was transfixed with astonishment. For what did he there behold? His wife was sitting, surrounded by her three children, cheerful and happy. His heart beat violently—he could scarcely breathe—he



dared not speak. At last he approached them with open arms, and cried, "What do I see? Thou still livest, my beloved wife! and thou, my daughter, they have not thrown thee to the wild beasts! and you, my beloved sons, they have not slain! It is as if I saw you risen from the dead."

They hastened up to him. His wife embraced him, her tears of joy fell on his face: his children kissed his hands and clasped his knees. All were happy beyond the power of words to tell. "Oh, how great will be the bliss of meeting again in heaven!" said the father. Mother and chil-

dren replied, "It seems to us as if we were already in heaven."

The King was pleased at this touching spectacle, and tears stood in his eyes.

Titus, recovering himself from his excess of joy, said to the King, "But tell me, O King, why thou hast threatened us so severely, and promised such a cruel death to my children, and now shown thyself so gracious and merciful to us."

The King answered, "I perceive it is now my duty to give you the reasons for my conduct. I was not myself opposed to the Christian religion—the Christians

were my favourite subjects ; but the severe decrees of the Roman Emperor required me, alas ! to root out this religion from my dominions. I reflected upon how I could accomplish this decree with as little blood-shedding as possible. With you, whom the Christians regarded as the best man of their community, I wished to make the first attempt. Your example, if you should obey, was to move them to do likewise ; but in case you refused, your execution was to terrify them. You rejected my proposals. I then thought through your children to force you to deny your faith rather than give your children up to death.

"What happened to your wife and your children in my palace you as yet know not. I will tell you, and you will rejoice at it.

"I had, as you know, first summoned your youngest son to me. The captain was to tell you what should happen to the child. This worthy old soldier told me what the boy's parents had said, and how fearless your son had proved himself when he was led away. I flattered the brave boy, stroked his cheeks and golden hair, and showed him everything which is pleasing to children, which I promised to give him. But with serious look he shook his head. I led him to the fire, and I was astonished to see that the child was ready to rush into it. I was grieved, however, for the brave little Mathias ; and so I ordered that he should be taken into a room in my palace, and there guarded.

"I sent the captain again to you, and ordered him to allow you to suppose that your son had been burned. I commanded him to summon your daughter, and to tell her what kind of death awaited her. The captain brought her, and told me all that had passed between her and her parents. I offered her the beautiful jewels in which maidens of her age take delight. I showed her the fierce tigers, who looked with flashing eyes out of an iron grating, and thirsted for her blood. I had the tender maiden placed in the centre of the court-yard ; the soldiers removed to a distance. I and many of my people looked out of the windows of my palace ; but there she stood cheerful and calm, as your histories describe the angels of God, and awaited,

without fear, the time when the grating should be withdrawn. But how could I have it in my heart to suffer such a brave and gentle maiden to be devoured by wild beasts ? I could not do it !

"Your eldest son, too, was as undaunted as she, and as your youngest son had been. Although he might rather be called a boy than a youth, he spoke to me as gravely and wisely as a man. I ordered him to be led to the place of execution. The cross of wooden beams, the hammer and nails, lay at his feet, but he showed no fear. He did not wait for the officers of justice to bind him on the cross ; he laid himself down on it, with outstretched arms, and said to them—'Do as you are commanded, as my Redeemer, died so will I die too.'

"Truly," said the king, "a heavenly power rules in your children, against which all the powers of earth can do nothing. I confessed myself vanquished. I myself led the youth to his brother and sister. Your wife proved herself the worthy mother of such children. I gave the children to her, and now I give them to you. I return to you both mother and children."

The king embraced Titus, and said, "A religion which produces such fruits, forms such good men, knits such tender bands between parents and children, gives such courage in death, and such a firm hope of an eternal life after death, must be from heaven. In you, your wife, and your children, I have learned to know what is great and glorious in the religion of Christ. Verily the Christian religion is the best, the most gracious gift of Heaven !

"And now," he continued, "let us be friends ; I am firmly determined to become myself a Christian. Yes, I wish from henceforth to belong to your Christian Church. I know full well, and foresee that the persecutions of the Christians in our country will not cease. I know that, if nothing worse happens to me, I shall have to lay down my crown. But what are earthly crowns in comparison with that crown to which even the humblest and poorest man on earth, who believes, hopes, and loves as you do, can attain ? Oh ! how far more glorious is that Heavenly Crown !"

DERISION.

BOBBY," said Andrew Webster, one day to his elder brother, "do you know what is meant by the word 'derision?' I have heard so many people talking about it lately; and it was only yesterday mother said to father she was certain the cause of all the disgrace that has come upon big Tom White was his not being able to face derision—what does that mean?"

Bobby Webster and Andrew were by no means of the same age, the former was about fifteen, while the latter was only eleven, and the younger looked on the elder as a sort of dictionary for explaining long words and giving him information upon all difficult subjects. It, however, happened that Bobby was at fault himself to-day about the word Andrew wanted to understand. He had been puzzling over it himself without success.

"I cannot tell you, Andy, but I will ask father to explain it to us when he comes home to tea to-night."

The two boys then resumed their game of play, quite forgetful that they had been baffled by one little word.

Many of the boys who read this could explain what they found so difficult, but I fear a greater number would shake their heads, we won't say wisely, and answer,—
"No, sir, I don't a-know."

Why is this so often the case? Why do boys prefer remaining silent when any little question is put to them, rather than give what they think is the right answer? They explain by their own conduct the meaning of the word which neither of the two Websters could understand.

It is *fear* that deprives them of speech—fear, lest the answer they give should be wrong, and lest they should be *laughed at* by their companions for their mistakes.

Every boy knows what it is to be laughed at, and derision is only another form of laughter with more contempt or scorn in it. Derision is one of the hardest things to bear; it often is the sole reason that a young man fails in giving up what he has found to be bad companions; it often is the cause of religion being disregarded, of God being mocked at; but there is no

reason why, because its power is so often triumphant, it should be feared. 'With God upon our side, why should we fear what man can do unto us?'

We must, however, now return to the two boys of our story, and hear how one of them found out for the other the meaning of the word that has been explained. As we shall not have much to tell about their parents, we need not go deep into the home history of Bobby and Andrew. It is enough to say, that Webster was a farmer, who boasted of some excellent broad acres in the north part of England; he had only three children—two boys and one girl. Like the wife, the husband considered his fondness to his children ought to be the reason for his taking greater care of their education; and so he sent his two sons to a good school in the nearest town.

These boys at the opening of our story had just come home for their Christmas holidays, full of tales and stories for the benefit of their less fortunate friends and companions in the village of Highdale, a short distance from the Websters' farm.

Every boy can boast of being able to do something better than another, be it in climbing or riding, running or gunning, football or cricket. Bobby was especially fond of his achievements; being older than Andrew, he, of course, far surpassed him in games, but especially he was famous for his pace in running and his 'pluck' in climbing. There were very few who could beat him at school, and in Highdale there was no one who could beat him; and often when little Andrew heard a village boy boasting of some deed of prowess, he used to blurt out in his odd Yorkshire way,—

"Aye, but that's nought; you just take sight on what our Bob does."

It was early in the afternoon, on the day of our story, that these two boys were playing before the farm-house—their home, when there appeared before them no less a personage than Mick Dalton, an old playmate of theirs. At one time Mick was 'a good, bright young fellow with an honest heart,' as an old farmer had once described him: but now he was assuming the man in a bad form,—a lie he considered a joke, and swearing something manly.

It did not particularly please either of the brothers to see him appear as he did, for they both knew his altered character, and instead of liking him they feared him.

Mick Dalton's first greeting was a low laugh.

"Why, Bobby, still playing at baby's games with Andy? I thought I had heard tell of different tales. They said up at village you were returned no end of a cheese from your new school, but I see they're all mistaken."

"What do you call baby games, Mick? swinging on a gate as you are doing? or playing peg-tops like Andy and I?" answered Bobby, laughing.

"Peg-tops! little dear that she is! innocent amusement! But come, you ought to leave off those playthings and do what I am going to do."

This foolish speech of Mick's was not uttered from any real thought of peg-tops being a baby's game; for he, like most boys, enjoyed it thoroughly; but because he had an object in view, and he knew how to gain a difficult person over to his side.

Bobby was by nature quick-tempered, and nothing nettled him so much as ridicule. When he first went to school he was led into the most foolish acts by his being unable to bear the 'chaff' of his companions: some of the fellows said he was like a bottle of ginger-beer, because directly he was a little shaken up he exploded. It had been a hard battle for him to try and overcome this evil, and he had not succeeded at the present time. The derisive talk of Mick Dalton was making him angry, and his answer told little Andy that he was being put out.

"I don't care what you are going to do, so long as you are off at once, and minding your own business."

Mick turned on his heel, saying,—

"Very well, Miss Webster, I'll tell 'tother chaps up village you've took to petticoats, and are learning to sew."

Where was Bobby's desire to restrain his temper? Every thought of curbing it had fled; it rose to a boiling pitch at Mick's reply.

"Stop, Mick," he shouted out; "here, I want you."

The lad returned, and in reply to the question, 'What do you want with me, Mick? for I see you're up to something,' whispered,—

"Meet me to-night about seven, at the corner of the blacksmith's shop; we have a lark in hand."

"No, I cannot," Bobby quickly answered, "father has forbidden me to leave the farm after dark; and, besides, I believe you fellows mean mischief."

"Well! never mind, my dear; I thought missy was afraid of ghosts. I'll make excuses, as I was *sent* to fetch you."

"Fetch me! who sent for me?"

"Oh, only Harry White, Sterne, and Kidd; they'll be very sorry to hear you are so changed, and no longer the Bobby they once knew."

These boys were some of the worst in the whole village, but Bobby dreaded refusing their invitation more, because most likely it would be attributed to cowardice.

So without thinking that there was a more courageous fight before him in refusing, the boy said hastily, '*I will come!*' and repented of the words as soon as they were spoken. Andrew heard the words, and he disliked the tones they were said in.

"What does he want with you, Bobby?" he exclaimed, as soon as Mick Dalton was well out of hearing.

"Nothing," was the reply.

"Do tell me, brother," coaxingly asked little Andrew.

"No, I cannot; and if I did you would not be much the wiser."

The subject was dropped, and the two boys returned to their play, and Andy did not like to question his brother, though shortly before tea he whispered,—

"Don't forget, Bobby, to ask about derision."

No answer, however, was returned, and, much to his surprise, his brother never during the meal brought forward the question he wished to have settled. Other thoughts occupied his attention; he had promised to disobey what was a command of his father's, 'not to go out after dark;' and how was he to do it?

Mr. Webster asked how the boys had been spending their day, and ended by



telling Bobby that he wanted him to run an errand for him that night.

"Where to?" asked Bob.

"Oh, only up as far as the village to Mark Hawthorn's, to ask him to come to supper to-night; but, maybe, I'd better send Tom" (meaning the farm boy).

"Oh, no, father; I'll go!" and he ran out of the room for his cap.

When he returned, Webster called out,—

"Mind, I shall expect you not to dawdle in the village, but to come straight home after my message is given, Bobby."

(To be continued.)

THE CHILDREN'S PRIZE

[No. V.]

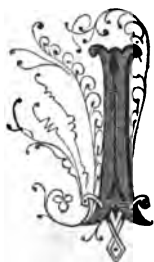
MAY, 1867.

[One Penny.]



"So it beest thou, Robert Webster, that I've caught "

DERISION.

(Concluded from page 64.)

IT was a dark, chilly night. The wind was not very high, but moaned through the hedges and over the fields, as its way is at that season of the year. It was impossible to see far before one; and if Bobby Webster had not known his road well, he would not have presented himself at the blacksmith's shop as soon as he did, after he had given his father's message. The village smithy was rather an old-fashioned, tumble-down place; the forge being twice as large as those of present date. It was built of stone with a chimney rising in turret shape far above the ivy-covered wall; trees and shrubs grew close around, giving a gloomy look to the whole structure. The village did not begin till three or four hundred yards above this smithy, so that it stood apart from any house. Work, of course, was over; and, as far as Bobby could make out, no one seemed to be near when he reached the blacksmith's shop. Suddenly a long, low whistle startled him, proceeding, as he thought, from the very depths of the darkness behind the smithy. A signal! Bobby gave a reply in the same fashion. For some seconds there was no response, then Bobby felt himself touched from behind, and a voice, which he knew to be Mick's, whispered, 'Webster, your hand; don't speak a word, but follow.' The hand was given, and Bob felt himself being led he knew not where. In another minute or two his guide pushed open a door, and they entered an outhouse lying at the back of the smithy, in the middle of which a bright fire was burning, while a group of five biggish lads were stretched on the ground. At his entrance they all greeted him with various expressions of pleasure, none of which sounded, however, particularly pleasing to his ears; as he was acting contrary to the prompting of his own conscience. All the boys with whom Webster found himself were former associates; he liked them all well enough

once, but now when face to face with them he felt inclined to break his agreement and return home. They told him he was plucky at coming, and just the same old 'brick' they knew, fond of a lark, and especially such an one as they were hatching for that evening.

"What is it that you want me for? and what's the game in hand?" Bobby asked; growing bolder the longer he stayed.

"Well," answered Harry White, "what we want you for to-night, is to help us in a bit of fun we mean to play off on old Taylor, the organist, as you know of. He has been desperate cross with us all lately, and last Sunday he told the parson about me, and got me caned. It's Saturday night to-night, so we want you to go down with us to the church. You're such a stunning climber, you could get in through the window above Wheeler's pew, and then get up to the organ-loft, and slit the bellows by the light of this lantern. I told Taylor I'd be revenged on him: it would be worth another thrashing to see his face when the parson gives out the hymn, and the organ won't play."

Taken aback by this long speech of White's and its strange proposal, Bobby had not an answer ready. He had no liking for old Taylor, and he would have liked the excitement of getting into the church at night, but then spoiling the organ was not in his line, and he at last boldly said so.

There was no chorus of indignant voices in answer to his refusal to slit the bellows of the organ, for the lads felt that they dared not do it themselves; but Mick Dalton, in a whining, mimicking tone, said,—

"Oh, dear little thing, was it wrong then to do such a thing? poor Miss Webster! how good she is! Wasn't she afraid of the cold wind without her bonnet and shawl?"

Any one looking at Bobby Webster could have seen how he was stung by that ridicule, but they could not have seen how hard he was battling again with conscience; and, alas! how, trusting to his own strength in the contest, he was fast failing. The rising tones of derision grew louder, as the lads saw him uncertain; they sneered at

him as 'a milksop,' 'his mother's darling,' and so on. Their derision conquered, and Bobby gave way.

Directly he had agreed to go, all made ready for a start. The church was not far from the smithy, and they soon reached it, and Bobby was beginning his ascent to the window which White had said was always unfastened, when some one discovered that they had forgotten the lantern.

"Never mind! who cares?" cried Bob, now reckless and excited; "I know my way well enough inside. Keep quiet, and I'll do it all right."

He had reached the window, and for a minute was rather surprised to see a light, as he fancied, within the church. He looked again through the glass, and seeing nothing, thought he must have been mistaken.

"Be sharp now," whispered his evil advisers below, while the moaning wind brought to his ears flattering words from their lips about his bravery and skill at climbing.

The window gave way when he pushed it up. Bobby knew that he had a good drop to make before he reached the floor of the church; but as he was to get out by the low window of the vestry, he had no fear about letting himself down.

When really inside, Bobby felt his courage failing. He was alone in the place where, even on Sunday, he had looked with awe upon the marble tablets on the walls; and last, but not least, he was in God's house. Such thoughts as these, however, did not rest long in his mind. Evil was too closely seated on his shoulder to let Goodness cause fear by her holy thoughts. He had gone so far, and might just as well do the rest. The organ, too, was not far up in the church,—a few steps to be mounted,—one stab of the knife,—and he would have accomplished his exploit.

Bobby moved out of David Wheeler's pew, into which he had dropped from the window, and began to grope his way down the aisle. '*Creak! creak! creak!*' What was that? Bobby listened; but not a sound could he hear,—all was perfectly still. It sounded very like a step, thought Bobby, now growing frightened; but who

would think of coming to church at that time of night?

A low whistle coming from his companions without now reached his ear; it was a signal, previously agreed upon, if there was danger near in the way of discovery; and Bobby had the pleasant feeling of hearing those who had persuaded him into the scrape running away as fast as they could. He was really alone in the old church now, which was horribly cold and damp. Flight was his sole thought since his comrades had deserted him; he cared no more for the organ or its bellows; all he desired was, to get well out of the place he was in. How was he to leave? By the vestry window of course, but to reach that there was the long aisle to go down, and Bobby felt more inclined to cry than to move. Excitement had forsaken him; all pleasure in the mischief he had foolishly undertaken to do was gone, and he was left entirely to the mercy of his conscience which began to rebuke him severely for his conduct. He saw plainly now how wicked he had been; and he knew that the cause of it all arose from being unable to face Mick Dalton's *laughter*. As he thought of laughter, something flashed across his mind about a little word Andy had asked him that morning. Yes, he could now understand its meaning; 'derision' was what had brought him into his present situation, and had made him disobey his father. Poor fellow, the thought indeed troubled him, his heart no longer was stubborn and cold to what his conscience was whispering, but, crying bitterly, Bobby moved down the aisle guiding himself by the pew-doors. Suddenly he again fancied he heard something '*creak*' in the church—something, he thought, moved in front of him. He stopped still and listened. '*Creak! creak!*'—it was like a person treading cautiously; and yet he could see nothing. No wonder his courage began to fail. It was certainly an awe-inspiring thing to be in a dark church at night, especially when the purpose of the visit was dishonourable. Strong men have quailed at slighter things than this. So Bobby's terror may be excused.

Shaking from head to foot, thinking

now that there must be a ghost in the church, Bobby moved down towards the vestry, the door of which he found open. A faint light glimmered in front of him—the window by which he sought to escape—he reached it, unlatched it, and then pushed it up; one leg was now half out, and he was about to draw the other up when ‘something’ from within caught hold of it—something held him back despite his struggles to get free, while a dark-lantern shot its light full in his face.

Too surprised to be frightened, Bobby heard the well-known accents of the organist, Harry Taylor:—

“So it beest thou, Robert Webster, that I’ve caught stealing out of the church; and now just thee come down and hear me talk a bit afore I let thee go.”

Bobby, unable to disobey, was brought a captive back to the vestry he had so nearly quitted, and now no longer in the dark, felt less afraid, though terribly ashamed.

“I heard all th’ talk of yon t’other chaps, Webster, and I knows it’s not thou that first wanted to cut the bellows of my organ; but I does know, young chap, that thou art mortal foolish,—ay, and wicked, to be laughed into doing any act like this one that I’ve caught thee at. Why, how’lt thee be able to do when thou art my age, if folks can talk and laugh thee into what they will? I was t’other side of smithy when thou wert in out-house, and knowing that something was up, I slips down here before thee and lets myself in by my keys, and was just a setting a light to my dark-lantern when I heard thee push the window up. I was before thee all the way down the aisle, and when I heard thee cry, I knew how the game stood, and how thou felt. So I pops into the vestry and waited there; but now thou may’st go home, Bobby,” added the old man, more mildly, “though remember from to-night to pray to God to help thee to resist the ‘derision’ of others.”

“Is derision being laughed at, please, Mr. Taylor?” asked Bobby.

“Yes; and thou may’st be pretty sure that it will be thy ruin if thou art so easily

led as thou hast been to-day. Now it is nigh on to nine o’clock, so I must be off, and recommend thee to do the same.”

Taylor then opened the big church-door; but, Bobby, before he left, asked and obtained the old man’s forgiveness for the mischief he intended doing him, and he ran as fast as possible for his home.

There was great anxiety and displeasure written on the face of Mr. Webster as his son made his appearance, but long before he had time to question him, Bobby had begun his confession, and never stopped till he had told everything.

His father in reply said nothing, though he inwardly prayed that his son might not be in after life led astray as he had been that night.

Bobby then went up-stairs to bed, where he found his brother anxiously awaiting him.

“Oh, Bobby, I am so jolly glad to see you, for I thought you had run away and would never come back more.”

The brother’s answer was very short, and said in a serious tone which the younger boy did not *then* understand; for Bobby whispered—

“Andy, I have learnt to-night what ‘*derision*’ means.”

M.

MAY SONG.

MAY is here: the world rejoices;
Earth puts on her smiles to greet her;
Grove and field lift up their voices;
Leaf and flower come forth to meet her!
Happy May—blithesome May:
Winter’s reign has passed away!

Birds through every thicket calling,
Wake the woods to sounds of gladness:
Hark! the long-drawn notes are falling,
Sad, but pleasant in their sadness.
Happy May—blithesome May:
Winter’s reign has passed away!

Earth to heaven lifts up her voices:
Sky, and field, and wood, and river:
With their heart our heart rejoices;
For this gift we praise the Giver.
Happy May—blithesome May:
Winter’s reign has passed away!



Maying.

THE GERMAN WATCHMAN'S SONG.

"HARK! ye neighbours, and hear me tell,
Ten now strikes on the belfry bell!
Ten are the Holy Commandments given
To man below from God in Heaven."

Human watch from harm can't ward us—
God will watch and God will guard us;
He, through His eternal might,
Give us all a peaceful night.

"Hark! ye neighbours, and hear me tell,
Eleven sounds on the belfry bell!
Eleven apostles, of holy mind,
Taught the Gospel to mankind."

Chorus: Human watch from harm can't ward us.

"Hark! ye neighbours, and hear me tell,
Twelve resounds from the belfry bell!
Twelve disciples to Jesus came,
Who suffered rebuke for their Saviour's name."

Chorus: Human watch from harm can't ward us.

"Hark! ye neighbours, and hear me tell,
One has pealed on the belfry bell!
One God alone, one Lord, indeed,
Who bears us forth in our hour of need."

Chorus: Human watch from harm can't ward us.

"Hark! ye neighbours, and hear me tell,
Two resounds on the belfry bell!
Two paths before mankind are free;—
Neighbours, choose the best for thee."

Chorus: Human watch from harm can't ward us.

"Hark! ye neighbours, and hear me tell,
Three now tolls on the belfry bell!
Threefold reigns the heavenly host,
Father, Son, and Holy Ghost."

Chorus: Human watch from harm can't ward us.

"Hark! ye neighbours, and hear me tell,
Four are the strokes on the belfry bell!
Four gospels pure to men proclaim
Eternal life in the Saviour's name."

Chorus: Human watch from harm can't ward us.

"Hark! ye neighbours, and hear me tell,
Five now rings on the belfry bell!
Five barley loaves, when Jesus will'd,
Five thousand fed—twelve baskets fill'd."

Chorus: Human watch from harm can't ward us.

"Hark! ye neighbours, and hear me tell,
Six now tolls from the belfry bell!
Six are the days to labour given,
In six days God created heaven."

Chorus: Human watch from harm can't ward us.

"Hark! ye neighbours, and hear me tell,
Seven resounds from the belfry bell!
The seventh day is the sacred rest—
The Lord's own day, the Sabbath blest."

Chorus: Human watch from harm can't ward us.

"Hark! ye neighbours, and hear me tell,
Eight are the strokes of the belfry bell!
And eight were the souls that the ark did save,
Above the flood's o'erwhelming wave."

Chorus: Human watch from harm can't ward us.

"Hark! ye neighbours, and hear me tell,
Nine has pealed on the belfry bell!
Then this sad hour saw Jesus die,
To save mankind thro' eternity."

Chorus: Human watch from harm can't ward us.

SCENES IN THE LIFE OF ST. PETER.

ST. PETER IN THE GARDEN OF GETHSEMANE.

St. Matt. xxvi. 36-43; St. Mark, xiv. 26-52; St. Luke, xxii. 39-51; St. John, xviii. 1-12.



THE last scene in St. Peter's life which we tried to picture to ourselves was one of heavenly brightness, when Jesus was transfigured before His three chosen witnesses. Some have thought that one reason why these three, Peter, James, and John,

were allowed to see the glory of their Master in the Transfiguration, was, that they might be able to bear the sight of His agony in the Garden of Gethsemane.

On the last evening of the earthly life of Jesus, after He had eaten the Passover supper with His twelve disciples in the upper chamber at Jerusalem, and had instituted that sacrament which we call 'the Lord's Supper,' or 'Holy Commu-

nion,' they sang a hymn, and *went out into the Mount of Olives.*

The Mount of Olives is about a mile from the city separated from it by the Valley of Jehoshaphat. In the bed of the valley there is the brook Kedron, and between Kedron and the first slope of Mount Olivet, there is a flat space on which grow to this day many olive-trees of immense age, which mark the place near which was the Garden of Gethsemane.

As they were going to the Mount of Olives, Jesus said to His disciples, "*All ye shall be offended because of Me, this night. I, your shepherd, shall be smitten, and you, my sheep, will be scattered abroad.*" Then Peter quickly answered, "*Though all men shall be offended because of Thee, yet shall I never be offended.*" Truly and deeply Peter loved his Master, he was grieved that he should be thought weak enough ever to deny Him. He was sincere, but he did not know his own weakness. Even when Jesus said to him plainly, *Verily, verily, I say unto thee, that this night before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice,* Peter still replied, *Though I should die with Thee, yet will I not deny Thee.*

When Jesus and his disciples reached Gethsemane, He said to the others, *Sit ye here while I go and pray yonder;* and He took with Him Peter and James and John, and went into a more secluded part of the garden, and there He told the chosen three that *His soul was exceeding sorrowful, even unto death,* and He bid them wait there and be wakeful, while He went a little farther, and *fell on his face and prayed, saying, O my Father, if it be possible let this cup pass from Me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as Thou wilt.* When Jesus had prayed He sent to His disciples and found them *asleep, and saith unto Peter, What! could ye not watch with Me one hour? Watch and pray that ye enter not into temptation.* Peter, a little while before, had said that he never would deny his Master, but already he was failing to show loving obedience to His bidding, already he was neglecting to seek in prayer the strength by which only he could stand firm in the evil hour.

A second time Jesus went and prayed, and a second time when He came back He found Peter and his companions sleeping.

He went away again and prayed a third time, and on His return He found that sleep had once more overpowered the three disciples, and He saith unto them, *Sleep on now and take your rest.* Not that He really meant them to continue sleeping, for already the crowd that were coming to take Him were trampling and shouting near, their torches flashing through the darkness, but He meant to tell them that now the time for watching and prayer was past, and that they might as well sleep on for any good that could now come of their watchfulness, and so He adds, *Rise up, let us go. Lo, he that betrayeth me is at hand.*

And then Judas with a crowd, armed with swords and staves, bearing lanterns and torches, drew near to lead Jesus away as a prisoner. The bold Peter, even in face of these armed men, *having a sword, drew it, and smote the high-priest's servant, and cut off his right ear,* but Jesus saw it, and said, *Suffer ye thus far, and He touched his ear and healed him.*

In spite of this miracle of love and forgiveness, in spite of His gentle words, *they that had laid hold on Jesus led Him away to Caiaphas the high-priest, where the scribes and elders were assembled, and Peter followed afar off.*

Let us, young and old alike, learn from this scene in St. Peter's life, not to trust in our own strength. He thought that he could do great things, he failed even in little ones. He thought he could bear bonds and imprisonment, he could not even pray for an hour. He thought that he could lay down his life for Christ's sake, he could not even keep awake. Ah! it is very true, as Solomon saith, "He that trusteth in his own heart is a fool." (Prov. xxviii. 26.) Wherefore, let us seek strength humbly to watch and pray that we fall not into temptation and sin.

NEVER do any act in life, on which you dare not first ask God's blessing.



Peter and his Companions Sleeping.



The Bell-Rock Lighthouse.

LITTLE MARY AND THE LIGHTHOUSE.

THE story is almost too well known to be repeated, of the little girl whose father lived in a lighthouse on a wild and rocky coast. The father, mother (who was a pious woman), and their little girl, lived alone, amidst the howlings of the great wide sea. One day the keeper went ashore, and when there, was seized and kept prisoner by a band of wicked men, who thought, if only they could keep him prisoner, the lighthouse would not be lighted at night, and vessels would be wrecked, of which they should get the spoils. But his little daughter was left in their watery home, and when no father came home at night, though her heart sank within her at his absence, she thought of the poor sailors who might be lost, and, brave girl that she was! she went up to the top, and, one by one, lighted all the lamps, till the whole sent forth the clear and welcome blaze. It was a noble action, and gave her and her father a warm heart of joy. So may the daughters of Israel send forth the lamp of light to many who sit in darkness!

TWICE QUEEN OF MAY.



KATIE GREY was a little blue-eyed girl whom every one loved to pet and indulge; from the father and mother whose pride and joy she was, to the old Squire, who would often stop at the cottage gate and bring some present of fruit or cake out of his capacious pockets for the little maiden. In fact, Katie was in a fair way of being spoiled, for in the six years of her little life she had scarcely known what it was to have her wishes thwarted. Now, though some of my readers may think that this must be very delightful, and that if they could always get their own way they should always be happy; I can assure them that the contrary is generally the case, and the happiest little ones are those who are most willing

to submit to control. Everybody thought that Katie Grey was very amiable, and she fully believed it herself; but only her mother and father knew how unwilling she was to give up her own comfort to theirs. "Pretty Katie" she was often called, and when she was no longer a little child there was nothing which pleased her so much as to hear people say what beautiful hair or eyes she had. Her parents, too, were very proud of having her, and seemed, like herself, to forget that there is something ten times more charming and lasting than beauty.

When Katie was about sixteen, the great ambition of her heart was accomplished. She was chosen May Queen; and a real village beauty she was, crowned with her garland of spring flowers. She knew it, and was content; but I am sorry to say that she grew very vain, and, thinking only of her good looks, became selfish and discontented; so that of the many who admired her, she retained the love of none but her father and mother, and this she seemed scarcely to value.

When spring-days came again the question arose, "Who shall be queen this year?" Katie was as pretty as ever, but not one mentioned her name now; and vexed, and disappointed, she determined to go away before the day came round. She did so, and, much to her parents' grief, went to live in the crowded city. Here she made new acquaintances who flattered her, and for a time she was very happy; but a sad change was coming. One morning Katie was seized with sudden illness; the doctor forbade any one to enter her room but a nurse. It was small-pox. She was too ill at first to think much about anything; but when she became a little better, she knew that she was no longer beautiful, and she was very, very miserable. One day as she lay on her lonely bed weeping very bitterly, and thinking that not one of her friends had been near her, she heard the doctor's step on the stair; hastily drying her eyes, she sat up to receive him. But it was not the doctor. Her own father stood in the doorway, but was turning away thinking he had made a mistake; he

did not know his child until she pronounced his name. It was sweet to the poor girl to have him with her; but her return home was a sad one: yet her changed face seemed only to make her dearer to her parents, proud as they had been of her before. Her old companions too came to see her, anxious to welcome her back and show their sympathy; and by degrees she settled down at home again, and soon found to her great comfort that none of her friends was less kind in consequence of her loss.

But May was coming, and all had agreed that Alice Smith should be crowned this year.

Poor Katie was sitting at her casement late one night; everybody else in the village seemed to be in bed, and she was thinking of the coming May day. "It was pleasant," she said to herself, "to be pretty, and to see that every one liked to look at me. But now I must try to make them all *love* me for myself, and—" but her thoughts were interrupted. A thick cloud of smoke rolled down the village street, and then a bright flame shot up from one of the roofs: she listened, but there was not a sound. Then suddenly came the thought, "It is a house on fire, and, perhaps, no one knows!"

She ran downstairs, aroused her parents, and went out in the darkness quickly in the direction of the fire. A turn in the road showed the Smiths' house in flames; and, as she came to the spot, she heard the cry of the mother, who, standing with her children before the burning dwelling, had just missed her eldest child from the group. The few neighbours, who had assembled, looked at each other. Every moment the roof was expected to fall in, it would be madness for any one to enter. Without a word, Katie made her way to the part of the house where she knew Alice slept, and rushing up the stairs, regardless of the smoke and heat, aroused the sleeping girl, and almost carried her out of the danger. They were scarcely over the threshold when the roof fell in, and the fearful words "Too late!" arose from those who were in front of the house. What was their joy to see the two young girls come round

the burning mass in safety, and a fervent "God bless her!" proceeded from all hearts.

The family, so suddenly deprived of their home, found a welcome and shelter in that of many kind neighbours until a fresh one could be found. Alice went home with Katie.

And May day came, the two friends (for such they had become) rose at sunrise, and collected many flowers used for the day; Katie used all her skill and practice in making Alice as lovely as possible, and she did look charming; none were more ready to acknowledge it than Katie. The procession soon came to claim her; but the villagers said that this year there must be two May Queens. Alice wore a crown of bright spring-blossoms which, sweet as they were, had faded by night. And Katie was crowned with a wreath of everlasting flowers, which she hung up in her little room, and kept in memory of the happy day when she was crowned a second time, and for something better than beauty.

THE BROKEN ARM.

AMONG four or five boys who were taken into work, one Monday morning at a large factory, was one named James Carter. As his mother watched him out of sight on this first morning of his going to work, she prayed that he might be kept from all evil. When he came home that night, he had much to tell of his work and his companions, and so on; then, seeing his mother's tired look as she prepared their evening meal, he said, "Some day, mother, you shall have nothing to do. I shall work and get money for us both."

He was an affectionate boy; but his only parent had many fears for him, because he was so easily led away by those with whom he associated. Now we all know that sometimes it is difficult to do what is right; but I think that the youngest of my readers knows that it is much easier to *keep from* doing wrong at first, than to *leave off* when we have once begun. And this James Carter soon discovered. There were bad as well as good boys in the factory with him; just as there are bad and good boys in every school, and bad and good men in every place



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in the world. But he chose the bad for his companions, and, though he found them doing what he knew was wrong, it seemed impossible to him to leave them. Sometimes his mother warned him, and begged him to take care; then he would resolve very sincerely never to do anything to grieve her; but when he was surrounded by his companions again, all his resolutions vanished. And so it happened that the money which he earned, and which he frequently determined should be spent for his mother, or carefully put by, was generally squandered with his idle companions.

One very severe winter's day James went home, and found, to his grief and surprise, no fire in the grate, no dinner ready, and

his mother, who had been taken suddenly ill, suffering terribly in her cold room. The lad set to work instantly to make a fire; but found the fuel almost all gone, and, worse still, there was neither food in the house, nor money to buy any. His last week's wages were spent, and now he felt how selfish he had been in letting his mother work so hard to supply his wants.

"But she shall have a fire," he said to himself; and, hastening back to the factory, he went quietly in at a side-door (knowing the foreman was away just then) and quickly collected a bundle of pieces of wood. Then, looking round for something with which to unite them, he saw a piece of rope that would just do. He seized it hastily, forgetting in his



fear of being detected, the great wheel that was revolving so rapidly near him. In another instant it struck against him, and sent him senseless to the earth with a broken arm. When the foreman returned there was no need to ask how it happened. The pile of wood told plainly that James Carter had been stealing. The broken arm was mended; but what skill can restore to its brightness a character that has once been tarnished? For some weeks James lay in the infirmary; but one morning, before daybreak, the youth was missing: no one knew where he went, and soon he was forgotten by all but his mother. *She* did not know *where* he went; but that same morning, when she came downstairs thinking sadly of her poor, misguided boy, and feeling weak from her

own recent illness, her heart was gladdened by reading a slip of paper which lay on her table; on it was written—"Good-bye, mother; I *will* come back, some day, and be a comfort to you." And his mother believed he would.

Some years after this, one bright, autumn day, a young man might have been seen walking quickly along a quiet, country lane; he was looking eagerly forward, as if wishing to catch sight of something before him. At length a turn in the lane brought a small cottage in view, and then the young man suddenly slackened his pace, walking slowly forward with his eyes bent on the ground. Soon he stood at the little gate; but he saw at a glance that it was *empty*, and the roses and honeysuckle had so blocked up the doorway and

porch, that it had evidently been so for many a day. The sight seemed too much for the young man; he turned away and sat down wearily on a log at some distance. He had walked many miles, but had felt no fatigue until now.

On the morning when he left the infirmary, James Carter had gone to London, and, obtaining a berth in a ship to Australia, was soon many hundred miles from England. He worked hard and endured many hardships, but he cared little for either; he was determined to redeem his character, and return to his mother a good man.

He had written repeatedly during his absence, but had never heard from home; and now that he came, and found the house shut up, he concluded she must be dead, and he could not bear the thought.

Presently a gentleman approached, and, seeing the young man's dejected look, he thought he must be in want. "My poor fellow, what ails you?" said he, "I think a good dinner would do you good;" and writing on a piece of paper he handed it to James, saying, "Take this to the house just by and give it to the housekeeper."

James Carter's heart was too full to speak; he took the paper silently, and the gentleman passed on. Then he rose and walked slowly towards the house. He wanted no food, but he longed to gain some tidings of his much-loved mother. The door was opened to him by the very person to whom the paper was addressed; and that was none other than the mother whom he thought he had lost! No letters from her son had reached her, and she had given up her cottage, and taken her present situation of housekeeper. Very soon the little cottage in the lane was occupied again, and James Carter had brought back such high testimonials of good character that he obtained work again at the factory, where he rose in time to be foreman. He made his mother's last days very happy, and often used to tell her, as they sat beside their fire, that he thought his broken arm had made his fortune. And the old woman would weep tears of joy and say, "Yes, James, if your first sin had not been discovered, who knows how far you might have been led astray?"



BRASS BUTTONS.

ARCHIE was seven years old — just a year too young for admittance into the grammar-school of the town in which he lived; just a year too old, as he thought, for being under Maudie's governess. What was to be done with him? His father and mother had had many consultations on the subject, and had decided on sending him to a small preparatory school, kept by a gentleman who

lived quite near to them.

Archie was in all his glory; as he could not be a "bull-dog," the name by which the grammar-school boys delighted to be called: why, the next best thing was getting ready to be one, it was a step in the right direction. If Maudie had not been as good and sweet as she really was, I do think she would have become heartily tired of Archie, and his long stories of all he meant to do. He was so proud of his promotion that he could do nothing but talk about it, all those Christmas holidays.

"What a jolly fight the bull-dogs and the curs must be having to-night," he said, as Maudie and he were looking out one evening on the fallen snow.

(I must tell my readers that by "the curs" were meant the boys of the commercial school in the same town, between whom and the grammarians there was a constant feud.)

"How dreadful!" said Maudie.

"You silly thing," said Archie, "it isn't dreadful, it's very jolly."

But Maudie said, "she shouldn't like it."

"No, of course not," said Archie, "that's because you are a woman. How I should hate to be a woman!"

Certainly, little Maudie, with her fat pink arms, and one round white shoulder sticking out from her loosened pinafore, didn't look much like a woman; however, she only said "Mother's a woman."

"Ah," said Archie, wisely, "that's different; mothers are not a bit the same as

other people, they are not women somehow, they are just——"

"What?" asked Maudie.

"Just mothers. But you are not like a mother, Maudie; so you are only a woman, and, except mothers, I don't see the good of women at all."

Maudie looked snubbed. Presently she said,—"I know something, that you don't know, Archie."

"What is it?" asked Archie; "but I don't want to know much."

"But it's something about you, Archie."

"Anything about my going to Mr. Cooper's?" Archie asked eagerly.

Maudie nodded.

"Oh, tell me what it is," Archie cried.

"Ah! but you were quite cross just now."

"Never mind, Maudie," said Archie, "I'm not cross now, and I know you can't help being a woman."

"But I like being a woman," said Maudie; "I want to be like mother."

"But you're *not* a mother," said Archie, doggedly.

Then Maudie, like a wise little girl, seeing that the old subject was turning up again, changed her ground, and said,—

"It's about your new suit."

"Is that all?" said Archie, "why, I don't care a bit about that, it's made of such stupid, ugly, dull stuff."

"It doesn't look dull now," said Maudie, mysteriously, "Oh, Archie, it's beautiful, and it's up-stairs lying on mother's bed."

"Let's go and see it," said Archie, and off the children scampered.

There, lying, as Maudie had said, on their mother's bed was the new suit; it certainly was very pretty, and gay enough even for Archie. It was made of dark-blue serge, with so many shining brass buttons that it quite glittered and sparkled.

"It is beautiful," said the little boy, touching the soft warm cloth almost respectfully, "and, oh, Maudie, how happy I shall be when I put it on! That will be the first day of my going to school. How happy I shall be!"

Was it to be so? Well, we shall see.

The long-looked-for, long-hoped-for day came at last, and Archie Vaughan's school-

life began. How well he remembered it all afterwards, when he could do nothing but "be silent, and be still," and think. It was a bright, frosty day, and he had on his new suit, and the sun was shining, and his chilblains had been better all the winter, and life seemed so sweet. Perhaps, "just at the back of his heart," as Archie himself would have expressed it, there was a little shyness—a half dread of the unknown future, but for all that he was very confident, very happy.

His father walked up to Mr. Cooper's door with him, and then left him. Archie and his big slate were shown into a room where sat his master, and three of his future companions. Two of these boys were sons of the Rector of a village about a mile and a-half from the town; they were healthy, happy, bright-looking boys, seeing a great deal of fun in everything, and much given to sticking together, and nudging one another. They were sitting very close to each other, and Brown, junior, was evidently trying to make Brown, senior, choke with stifled laughter as Archie entered. School not having properly commenced,—for the clock had not yet struck nine,—they were not called to order.

Next to them sat a boy whose face Archie *never* forgot, though he did not see it very often. It was a pale little face, with great, grey, wide-opened eyes, that seemed, as they looked at you, to see farther and farther away than you did—eyes that were always asking questions, and yet which struck you with awe and wonder at the solemn wisdom their depths betrayed. "Taught of God," "set apart," were phrases that always came into your mind, looking at little Harry Cooper. And yet there is not much to tell you about, the sober, little fair face, dull-coloured all over, from the soft maize-tinted hair, without one golden glint in it, to the pale lips; nothing to tell, except that the child looked God-guarded, God-taught all over.

He was the only child of Archie's master and his wife, at least the only living child, for there were many in heaven of whom they could have said, "the keeping of them is with the Lord."

Next to this boy Archie took his place,



feeling as if the little stranger's tender wisdom would protect him from the shyness and awkwardness which he felt. Mr. Cooper spoke kindly to the new boy, and so did Mrs. Cooper, who, to Archie's surprise, was working in the school-room, close to her husband. He

afterwards found that refractory boys were always sent to her, and found too, by experience, how impossible it was to resist her gentle influence. She was a sweet-voiced lady, who "looked like a mother," and she won Archie's heart at the first glance.

(To be continued.)

THE CHILDREN'S PRIZE

No VI.

JUNE, 1867.

[One Penny.]



Archie striking Armstrong.

BRASS BUTTONS.

(Continued from p. 80.)

JUST as the clock was striking nine, in burst two boys, noisily and rudely. "Silence, Armstrong," said the master, to the eldest, a high-coloured, large-headed boy, two or three years older than Archie. His companion was about eight, a boy without anything peculiar about him except, perhaps, fear of his brother.

Jack Armstrong, the eldest, bumped himself down on the bench close to Archie, and as soon as Mr. Cooper was engaged with one of the Browns, introduced himself with—

"Hullo, Buttons, are you the new boy? I'm Jack Armstrong, the cock of the school."

Archie shrank away with something very like disgust; the boy was so big, and had such dirty hands, and "didn't look a bit like a gentleman," as he said to himself.

"Don't mind him," whispered little Harry Cooper, "it doesn't matter if he *does* tease, you know."

But Archie did mind him, he seemed to tingle from the crown of his head to the soles of his feet with mingled dislike, anger, and—shall I say it?—a little fear. Archie was no coward, but the boy was so much older and stronger than he was, that he felt powerless to put a stop to his rudeness. What business had Jack Armstrong to call him "Buttons?" he looked down at his pretty new dress in a nervous way; alas! before the day was over Archie had learnt to hate it, and to wonder how he had ever wished to come to school.

For he was so tormented by his companions, not in an open way, "for then," thought Archie, "I could have borne it," but it was all done on the sly, and he had been brought up to detest anything underhand. When the master's back was turned, Jack Armstrong's time for his petty persecutions began: he would pinch Archie, or tread on his toes as if by accident, or pull

his hair, or run a steel pen into his cheek by holding it close to his face, and then begging him to turn round, till the child was so stung and irritated, that he could hardly refrain from showing how angry he was. You and I know how passionate poor Archie was, happily he had lately been trying very hard to conquer his besetting sin, otherwise I do not know how he would have got through that day.

Being a new boy, Mr. Cooper did not call him up till the last, and by that time he was so completely upset that he did nothing right, and went back to his seat with his heart full of tears which he dared not shed. Then Mr. Cooper told them all to read in turns, and how was his master to know that Archie's hesitations and mistakes did not arise from ignorance, but were caused by a pin which Jack Armstrong had thrust into his calf? (Knickerbockers afford so little protection in a case of this sort.) Had the child not been taken up so entirely with his own miseries, he might have noticed that the boy who was bullying him made many more mistakes than he had done, also that ignorance, not nervousness, caused those mistakes. But whilst Jack Armstrong was blundering through his passage, Archie was staring straight before him, squeezing his hands tightly together, and trying hard not to cry.

At last the clock on the Green struck twelve. The Green clock and the church were visible from Mr. Cooper's windows, and school was over, to Archie's immense relief. His master called him up and spoke very kindly to him.

"I am sure you will get on very well in time," he said; "a little nervousness is only natural, as everything is so new to you."

"And you must not mind a little teasing at first, Vaughan," said Mrs. Cooper.

Yes, they were very kind, but somehow Archie felt as if they had taken him for older than he really was, it sounded so grown-up to be called "Vaughan," and he did feel so very little and young just then.

"The two Browns always dine with us, as they live so far out of town," said Mr. Cooper, "so I let my boys play in my

back-garden every day till one o'clock, if they wish it. You may join them if you like, Vaughan."

"Thank you, sir," said Archie, and he went.

But play-time was worse than school-time had been. As he went into the garden a shout of "Buttons! Buttons!" greeted him; it was, of course, led by Jack Armstrong, but the two Browns simply in the spirit of fun, and with no wish to give pain, joined in lustily. Archie got very red, but said nothing.

"I'll pull your hair out of curl, Buttons," said Jack Armstrong, twitching one of the soft yellow locks nearly out of Archie's head.

"Leave me alone," cried the boy angrily. "What business have you to call me by that name? You shan't, for I'll tell my mother if you do."

"You sneak!" said Armstrong, "if you go telling your mother everything that happens here like a great baby, as you are, you'll never be good for anything." Then he pulled Archie's hair again.

"Armstrong," called out a weak little voice, and looking round, the boys saw Harry Cooper's pale face at the garden-door,—"Armstrong, if you bully Vaughan I'll tell my father, and if I were Vaughan I would tell my mother everything."

"No," said one of the Browns, "that wouldn't be right; my father says it isn't fair to tell tales out of school."

And so it was that Archie made up his mind to say nothing at home of what happened at school. Brown's speech had not been heard by Harry, for just then he was called away by his mother, who said,—

"Oh, Harry, come in, how can you stand there? You know you will catch cold."

"Molly-coddle," said Armstrong; and Archie felt very angry. Harry was on his side, as it were, and yet he could do nothing to protect him from sneers. He hated "being called names" so much that he could not have understood, even had he known, that Harry did not mind it in the very least.

All this time the two Browns were keeping up a continuous "Buttons, Buttons," which annoyed Archie very much.

"Why do you do it?" he asked, angrily.

"Oh, it's a very good name," laughed Brown, junior, "and so is the one my brother gave Armstrong, Bullet-head Armstrong, we call him."

Jack Armstrong doubled his heavy fist, and chased Brown, junior, round the garden; but the boy danced before him, slipped through his fingers like an eel, twisted and turned about in every imaginable and unimaginable fashion, laughed all the while, and shouted out "Bullet-head Armstrong" at intervals.

At last Armstrong stopped, knowing by experience that, even if caught, there was no satisfaction to be gained from pummelling the Browns; they were just like india-rubber, the more you beat them, the less impression was made, they seemed to be elastic. Nor could they ever be induced to look at anything from a serious point of view; the world was comic for them, and I have often wondered how Mr. Cooper managed to impress upon them any serious knowledge.

In the commotion caused by Brown, junior, Archie slipped away, and went home sorrowfully. He felt so heavy-hearted, not in the least like the hopeful boy who had walked up the pretty Green that morning. And oh, how unspeakably pleasant seemed the dear mother and the home that he had joyfully turned his back upon only four hours before!

Not being given to show his feelings, he said nothing about the placid sense of content which stole over him as he entered the house; only he rubbed himself against his mother in a sideways fashion, somewhat as a kitten does, and looked wistfully up in her face. She stooped and kissed him.

"Well, Archie, how did you like it?"

Then Archie, with the name "sneak" and Brown's words still tingling in his ears, made up his mind to say nothing but "Pretty well, mother;" which he did, and then asked, "Where's Maudie?"

"Gone out for a walk; how is it that you were not here in time to go with her? She did not start till a quarter past twelve."

"Oh," said Archie, "the two Browns always dine with Mr. Cooper, so he lets us

all stay and play in the garden with them every day till one."

"Well," said Mrs. Vaughan, with a little sigh, "I suppose it is pleasanter for you to be playing with your school-fellows than walking with your sister and her governess. But, Archie, remember, no one is too old to care for their mother, and you are still my own little boy, though you have gone to school."

Then Archie and his mother had a long talk about his two great troubles just then, his temper and his sums. But what was said about the first was not meant for you or me to hear, and what was said about the last was very little, for, as Archie told his mother "he had not come to them yet at Mr. Cooper's."

But he did "come to them" that very afternoon, and they opened a new source of grief. He was very slow at figures, and could never say "seven times" properly; but it just happened that Mr. Cooper gave him a long line of figures, all to be multiplied by seven, and Archie did it wrong. There was, from the beginning, very little chance of his having brought it right, but even that little chance was taken away by Jack Armstrong. He sat by Archie again, and continued his torments of the morning, finishing by stretching rudely across him, and with his elbow—as if by accident—rubbed out a good half of the unfortunate sum. Then Archie got angry and spoke loud, and was called to order by Mr. Cooper, and it took him quite half-an-hour to replace the figures, and, after all, as I have said, the sum was wrong.

Mr. Cooper looked it over, and instead of worrying the boy's patience by making him do it again, very kindly rubbed it all out, and said, "Now we will try addition: I daresay you will be more successful with multiplication another day."

Archie gratefully took his slate, and asked leave to sit alone at the opposite end of the room. Mr. Cooper said "Yes," so he seated himself with his back to the others, and made up his mind to try very hard to do his sum.

But he felt so stupid, and thoughts of Jack Armstrong would come between the threes and fours, the eights and nines,

and made them all at sixes and sevens with each other. Then the tears which he had kept back all day,—the tears which had made his eyes hot and his head heavy, came all of a sudden, when he did not expect them, and was not prepared to meet them, and splashed down on the slate, blotting out the figures he was 'carrying,' and startling the eyes from which they fell, out of all contemplation of the work before them. Archie's one ambition now was, to stop the supply, but this was not easy, for tears belong to such a large family, so many brothers and sisters come trooping after the first. And don't they just make a mess of one's slate? I, who have foolishly shed so many, can solemnly testify that there is nothing for taking away the "drearsome" streaks they leave, but sponging with fresh water. If you rub them off ever so hard with your handkerchief they still leave tell-tale smears which an experienced eye will soon detect.

But Archie was not so wise as I am, and it was whilst he was scrubbing away with his handkerchief at the old drops on his slate, whilst the fresh ones were still dripping down, that he heard a hoarse whisper behind him.

"What! Buttons blubbing?" said Jack Armstrong.

Then Archie got up, and lifting the tear-smear'd slate with both hands, struck his tormentor's large head with it. The crash resounded through the room, and was succeeded by a terrible silence. Then Mr. Cooper spoke,—

"Armstrong," he said, "go back to your seat. Vaughan, I overlook all misdemeanours for the first day or two of a boy's coming here, otherwise the offence you have just committed is one that could not have been passed over."

(To be continued.)

WILD FLOWERS.

These verses were written by the late Lady Noel Byron on hearing of prizes being given to the children employed in a cotton-mill for the best nosegay of wild flowers.

WHO loves the wild flower best?
The sailor who has never seen
For many weeks the living green
Of earth's familiar breast?



Perchance 'tis he who hath
In fever on his bed reclined,
And meets the healing, fragrant wind
And primrose in his path?

Or is he still more glad
Who, issuing from the prison's gloom,
Imagines all the flowers that bloom
In heightened colours clad?

No; there is yet a joy more pure,
Less tinctured with regret or fear,

Where mem'ry mingles not a tear—
Oh! may that joy endure!

'Tis when the factory child
Strives for the kindly-offered prize,
And gathers for the judge's eyes
A garland fresh and wild.

In that sweet garland blend
Our Heavenly Father's smiles of love,
And the best pledge—how dear above!—
That man shau. oe man's friend!

THE BROTHER AND SISTER.

From the German.



ONE day James and Ann found themselves alone in the house, and the former said to his sister, "Come, Ann, we will try and find something nice to feast ourselves with."

Ann replied, "If you will take me to a place where no one can see us, I consent to be of the party."

"Oh well," said James, "come with me into the dairy, there we will have a pot of cream."

"No," said Ann, "for look! our neighbour, chopping wood before his door, will be able to see us."

"Then come into the kitchen, there is a jar of honey in the cupboard, and we will dip our bread in it; that will be good."

Ann replied, "But, consider, there is the neighbour who always sits with her work at the opposite window; she will see us."

"Well," replied her brother, "we will go into the cellar where we shall find some capital apples, and it is so dark there that certainly nobody in the world can see us."

Ann replied, "Oh my dear brother, you do not really believe there is any place where nobody can see us; do you not know that there is an Eye above which can penetrate any wall, and see clearly in the thickest darkness?"

James was silent for a moment, then cried, "You are right, my good sister, God is present everywhere. He sees us, where we could not possibly be discovered by any human eye: then let us not do anything wrong."

Ann was rejoiced to find that her brother took her lesson to heart, and gave him a picture, in which the eye of God was painted, surrounded by rays of light, and underneath it these words,—

"God sees us always. Let this thought keep us from sin."

SCENES IN THE LIFE OF ST. PETER.

ST. PETER IN THE HIGH-PRIEST'S PALACE.



St. Matt. xxvi. 69-75; St. Mark. xiv. 66-72; St. Luke. xxii. 54-62; St. John, xviii. 15-18, 25-27.

IN our last scene we saw St. Peter sleeping in the garden of Gethsemane when he should have been praying, and so now we find he had no real and lasting courage when the hour of trial came.

It is true he boldly drew his sword and smote the high-priest's servant, but when he found the attack was to be met, not by the strong arm, but by patient meekness, then he shrunk from his Master. A little while before he had said, *Though all shall be offended, yet will I never be offended*; but now he only *followed afar off unto the high-priest's palace, and went in and sat with the servants to see the end*.

The soldiers did not lay hands on St. Peter or the other Apostles, and so he might have been at his Master's side, showing by words, or at least by his looks, how sad he was at what had come upon Him: but instead of this he only *followed afar off*, seeking to avoid notice in the crowd under cover of the darkness: if he had been near to Jesus, we may be sure that He would have spoken to him words of comfort and of hope, which might have saved him from falling into the terrible sin of which we have now to tell.

St. John, who was perhaps himself the 'other disciple,' tells us that *Simon Peter followed Jesus, and so did another disciple: that disciple was known unto the high-priest, and went in with Jesus into the palace of the high-priest; but Peter stood at the door without. Then went out that other disciple, which was known unto the high-priest, and spake unto her that kept the door, and brought in Peter*.

And now the temptation came on St. Peter, before which he so sadly fell. The damsel who let him into the hall, when she saw Peter warming himself, said, *Thou*

also wast with Jesus of Nazareth ! But he denied, saying, I know not, neither understand I, what thou sayest.

He did not dare to confess his Master, and so he quibbled and pretended not to understand. This was in itself false, and soon led on to a more outspoken lie.

He had gone out into the porch after the first question, perhaps to escape further notice; and there the cock crew—a reminder, if he would have heeded it, of the warning of Jesus: *Before the cock crow twice thou shalt deny me thrice.*

But he heeded it not; and when another maid saw him, and said to her companions, *This fellow was also with Jesus of Nazareth, again he denied with an oath; I do not know the Man*—words which were perhaps the most woeful lie that ever passed from man's lips, when we think how Peter had been called by Jesus, had seen His miracles, seen Him walk on the sea, seen Him transfigured in His glory, and was now within a few yards of Him, and yet could say, *I do not know the Man!*

But there was even a lower depth of sin to which St. Peter fell. After the second denial St. Peter came again into the hall, within sight of Christ. Here, *after a while, they that stood by said unto him, Surely thou art one of them; thou art a Galilean, and thy speech agreeth thereto.*

Jesus was counted a Galilean; most of His disciples came from Galilee, and St. Peter's way of speaking, different from that of dwellers in Jerusalem, made the people in the judgment-hall think that he must be a follower of Jesus.

Then *one of the servants, being a kinsman of Malchus whose ear Peter cut off, said, Did not I see thee in the garden with Him?* This added evidence made the fallen Apostle feel that mere denial was useless, and so he began to curse and to swear, saying, *I know not this Man of whom ye speak; and the second time the cock crew, and the Lord turned and looked upon Peter. And Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how the Lord said, Before the cock crow twice thou shalt deny me thrice; and when he thought thereon, he went out and wept bitterly.*

The Lord looked on Peter, but Peter

could not bear to look on Him. That 'kind, upbraiding glance,' broke his unfaithful heart, and in his shame and sorrow he sought some secret place where he might pour out tears and cries for pardon. And terrible as his sin had been, God saw his tears and heard his cries, and he was forgiven; so that in our next scene we shall find him able to appeal to his Master with all confidence in the presence of the other disciples, and to say, *Lord, Thou knowest all things, Thou knowest that I love Thee.* (St. John, xxi. 17.)

This sad scene in the life of St. Peter should teach us all how dangerous it is to be over-confident in ourselves. Solomon says, *He that trusteth in his own heart is a fool* (Prov. xxviii. 26); and St. Paul gives this piece of advice, which we should lay to heart when we are ready to think that we could never sin as St. Peter sinned, *Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.* (1 Cor. x. 12.)

. THE SHIP OF THE DESERT.

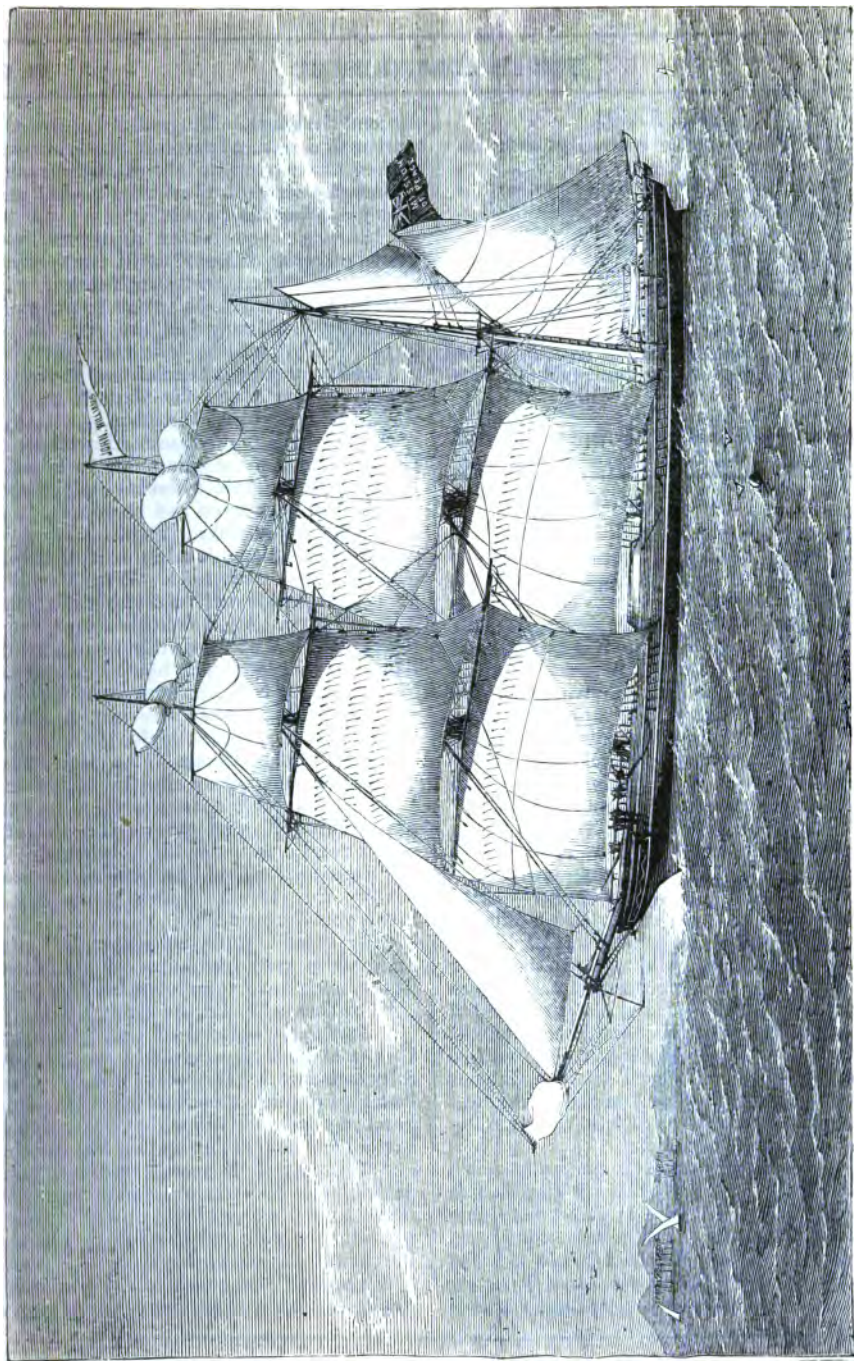
TH**ERE** is a sea without water and without refreshing breezes, without ebb and flood, without fish and sea-weed! And there is a ship which safely conveys goods and passengers from one shore to the other of that sea—a ship without sails or masts, without keel or rudder, without screw or paddle, without cabin or deck!

This ship, so swift and sure, is the Dromedary; and that sea is the Desert!

If it were not for the help of the Dromedary, the desert would have remained unknown and impassable by man. On it depends the very life of the wandering tribes of the East, the whole commerce of North Africa and South-west Asia; and so it is no wonder that the Bedouin prizes it, and the fruit-teeming date-palm, as the two most precious gifts of the God he reverences under the name of "Allah." Other animals have been formed for the forest, the water, the fields, but the work of the Camel is to be the guide, the carrier, the helper, and the companion, of man in the trackless deserts of sand.



“Thou also wast with Jesus of Nazareth



The Ship.

THE SHIP.

HEAVEN speed the canvas, gallantly unfurled,
 To furnish and accommodate a world,—
 To give the pole the produce of the sun,
 And knit the unsocial climates into one.
 Soft airs and gentle heavings of the wave,
 Impel the fleet whose errand is to save,
 To succour wasted regions, and replace
 The smiles of opulence in sorrow's face.
 Let nothing adverse, nothing unforeseen,
 Impede the bark that ploughs the deep serene,
 Charged with a freight transcending in its worth
 The gems of India, nature's rarest birth,
 That flies like Gabriel on His Lord's commands,
 A herald of God's love to pagan lands.

GASPER MORGAN'S
TEMPTATION.

OLD, hungry, and ragged, was Gasper Morgan as he stood looking in at a famous cake-shop in Boston. His little cold nose was flattened against the great window-pane, his blue fingers were thrust into pockets that had seen better days, and his bare toes just touched the frosty pavement as he stretched up, gazing wistfully at the temptingly-arrayed 'goodies.' Within, John, the baker's boy, was busily dealing out hot loaves and nice fresh-looking cakes to the crowd of customers.

"Oh, ain't them cakes jolly?" cried Gasper, in his delight, forgetting himself and speaking aloud. "Wouldn't I like to be a baker's boy! Oh, my! see that feller cram down the gingerbread! If it was only me. Crackie!" and Gasper executed a gymnastic at the thought; and then put his face to the window again. He was so busy talking to himself that he did not notice the mirth of a little old man almost hidden in a fur overcoat who was standing in the shadow near by.

"Oh, dear!" sighed Gasper, as he saw a servant loading a basket. "Wouldn't it be nice to carry home that basket to mother and little Sue? How mother would cry, and Sue would eat like a house a-fire!" and Gasper took his nose away from the window to watch the servant and basket

descend the steps. But just then a portly man with a market basket on his arm came puffing clumsily up the steps, and running against the servant, upset the basket and nearly capsized its bearer.

"I'll teach you better manners, you great lumbering fellow!" cried the servant, picking up his scattered purchases.

"Ho, ho!" cried the great man, good-naturedly. "Nearly put an end to ye, hey? Well, don't lost your temper!"

"Lose my temper!" exclaimed the other, fiercely, "You'll pay for that!" and he rushed after him into the shop.

Gasper was a highly amused witness of the scene, and was giggling 'all to himself' by the large window, when he caught sight of something white on the pavement, and with a cry of joy picked it up.

"Crackie! if it ain't a big loaf of bread! Warm as an oven, too! Won't mother and Sue have a feast!" and the little fellow danced for joy. All at once his countenance fell, and he looked stealthily around. He had been well taught by his pious mother. She had often told him she would rather starve than take what was not her own. There was a great struggle going on in Gasper's heart just then. The good at last triumphed, and, with a smothered sob and a determined look upon his face, he went bravely into the shop where the wrathful servant and man were still disputing.

"Here, mister," said he, pulling the servant by the sleeve, "here's your loaf of bread you dropped!"

"My bread! you young rascal!" cried he, glad to vent his spite on some one, "how much have you stolen besides?"

"For shame!" said the stout man.

"That's all the thanks I get," muttered Gasper as he trudged angrily and sorrowfully homeward. But when almost there, he heard a quick step behind him, and a hand was laid on his shoulder. Turning, he saw a little old gentleman in a big fur coat.

"Well, my little man," said he, pleasantly, "why did you not carry home the bread to mother and little Sue?" Gasper turned very red, and the merry old man burst into a fit of laughter.

"Ho, ho!" he chuckled; "I thought you didn't know somebody was looking at

you all the time." Then he added gravely, "Give me your hand, my boy. I saw it all, and it's lucky you did not yield to the tempter. I should have snapped you quick as a wink; for if there's anybody I'm down on, it's a thief."

"I hope I shall never do so again," said Gasper, confusedly.

"I'll risk you," said the man. "Now take me to your home, and I'll help you, or my name isn't Nicholas Grum!"

Gasper told his new friend his sad story—how his father had died and left his mother to take care of the children—how she grew sick, and Susie cried for bread.

But it would take a long time to tell what a kind friend Mr. Grum was to the poor family. He hired new and better lodgings, and little Susie, a pretty, black-eyed girl, soon grew plump and bright. As for Gasper, he forgot his desire to be a baker's boy with his first good dinner. But his friend got him a situation in a shop, where, by his honesty and industry, he at last rose to be a partner, and is now a well-known merchant of Boston.

THE POISONED CUP.

CYRUS, son of Cambyses, king of Persia, when he was a boy of twelve years, went to pay a visit to his grandfather the King of Media. He was made cup-bearer, and he did the duties of the office so well that his grandfather and all the court were charmed. But when he omitted to taste the wine before presenting the cup to the king, his grandfather, thinking he had forgotten, reminded him of this part of his duty. The little Cyrus replied that he did not taste the cup because there was poison in it. Of course everybody was surprised to hear this, and his grandfather asked what he meant. "I know there is poison in it," replied Cyrus, "because when you and your lords have been drinking the wine, your senses seem to go away, you talk without meaning, and even you, my grandfather, when you would have danced, had not the power to do so."

"But," said the king, "have you never seen your father in the same state?"

"No," said the little boy, "my father drinks to quench his thirst, but no more."

JUST IN TIME.

IT'S no use trying any longer; I have done all I can to keep honest, and I am poorer than ever. I may just as well go and hear what Will Read and his brother have to say to me," said a weary working-man, walking homewards, as he had done many days of late, after a vain endeavour to find work; and he turned towards a dwelling, half cottage, half shed, where two brothers lived who had no character for honesty.

He paused a moment for the thought of a loving, little heart in his poor home checked him as it always had done, keeping him from evil. "Ah, poor little Janie, what would she say? Well, but it is for her I want to be better off, and when I am I will do all she wishes. I cannot go home, day after day, with the same tale, and see her patient, little face trying to make the best of it, when she has to stitch, stitch from morning till night."

"Hollo, Hawkins, where are you bound for, looking so miserable? Come in here, and have a pipe," said the elder of two men who were standing together; they were the Reads.

Hawkins entered with them, smothering his bitter thoughts of Janie and what was right. He knew quite well that his little daughter would rather have starved than that her father should be in evil company. On the table hot food was smoking, and, as the visitor accepted the invitation of his hosts to sit down and partake, he thought of the contrast this good meal presented to his own bare table. They soon began to talk of what they called business, telling their guest that if he would only join them he would soon be able to live as he liked. Hawkins had always been known as a true and honest man, he had been brave too in bearing many troubles; but now he was out of spirits, and ready to do anything rather than endure the poverty which seemed to be the lot of himself and his child. These men had often tempted him, for he was quick and active, and they knew would be a good help to them if only he could be



made to give up his stupid notions as they called them.

And now that he was out of work and in want, they thought they could more easily carry their point. And Hawkins, as he listened, felt strongly the temptations they offered and had almost made up his mind to get some money soon in any way, when the three men heard a voice say, "I think I saw him go in here, ma'am, if you will wait, I will tell him."

And the door was pushed open by a lad of the village, who said, "John Hawkins, here is a lady asking for you."

The men frowned at the interruption; but Hawkins rose, and, promising to return, recognised in his visitor a wealthy lady who was one of Janie's kindest friends. She had come to say that she required the services of a trustworthy man immediately at her estate many miles away, and, knowing how

good a girl Jane was, she had wished to serve her; and, feeling sure that the father who had so well trained his motherless child must be a deserving man, she offered him the situation. She had been to his home; but not finding him, and being in haste to have the business concluded, had followed him. Hawkins felt abashed as he spoke; he *had* done his very best for Janie he knew: but then at this very time had he not given up in despair? He felt he did not deserve the praise

Janie and her father, who did not return to his companions, left their poor cottage, and were soon settled in the pretty lodge of a beautiful park. Janie had plenty of work from the great house, and her father lived to be an old man on the estate of the lady who, guided by God's good providence, had appeared just when the evil seemed likely to overcome the good.



THE STORMY PETREL.

THE Stormy Petrel has long been celebrated for the way in which it passes over the waves of the ocean, pattering with its webbed feet and flapping its wings so as to keep itself above the surface of the water. It is most active in stormy weather, because then the creatures on which it feeds are flung to the surface of the sea by the waves, and are easily picked up by the bird as it skims along. It will also remain many days in company with a ship at sea, for the sake of picking up the refuse food thrown overboard. Sailors call the bird "Mother Carey's Chicken," and dislike it, because they think its presence foretells a storm.

It is thought by those who have written about the Petrel that the bird never dives, but always remains on, or just above, the surface of the water; and perhaps owing to this it is called *Petrel*, after St. Peter, who walked on the waves.

It does not frequent the land, except during the breeding-season, when it lays its white egg in some convenient hole near the shore, often choosing a rabbit-burrow for the purpose. It is chiefly on our northern coasts that the Petrel breeds.

APPLY thine heart unto instruction,
and thine ears unto the words of Knowledge.—PROV. xxiii. 12.

THE POWER OF GOODNESS.

JOHN KANT (not the German philosopher of that name) was Professor and Doctor of Divinity at Cracow. He was a pious, holy man, with a spirit peculiarly gentle and guileless, and he at all times would have preferred to *suffer* injustice rather than inflict it. For many years he had followed his duties as spiritual teacher of the place to which he had been appointed by God. His head was covered with the snows of age, when he was seized with a strong desire to revisit the scenes of his youth in his native country, Silesia. The journey appeared full of danger to one so old as he was; but he set his affairs in order, and started on his way, commending himself to the care of God. He rode slowly along, dressed in his black robe, with long beard and hair, according to the fashion of the time. He made his way through the gloomy woods of Poland, which scarcely a sunbeam could pierce; but there was a light in his soul, for God's Spirit lightened it.

One evening, he was thus journeying along, holding communion with God, and taking no heed of objects beside him when he was suddenly surrounded by men, some on horseback and some on foot. Knives and swords glittered in the moonlight, and Kant saw that he was at the mercy of a band of robbers. Scarcely conscious of what passed, he alighted from his horse and offered his property to the gang. He gave them a purse filled with silver coins, unclasped the chain from his neck, drew a ring from his finger, and took from his pocket his book of prayer, which was clasped with silver.

"Have you given us all?" cried the robber chief, threateningly; "have you no more money?"

In his alarm and terror, the trembling doctor answered that he had given them every coin in his possession; and on receiving this assurance, he was allowed to proceed on his journey.

Quickly he hastened onward, rejoicing at his escape, when he remembered that he had some gold pieces stitched into the hem of his robe. The good man, in his alarm, had forgotten his secret store. His heart, therefore, again beat with joy, for the money would bear him home to his friends and kindred, and he saw rest and shelter in prospect, instead of a long and painful wandering, with the necessity of begging his way. But his conscience was a peculiarly tender one, and he stopped to listen to its voice. It cried in disturbing tones, "Tell not a lie! Tell not a lie!" These words burned in his heart. Joy, kindred, home, all, were forgotten. Some writers have held that promises made under such circumstances are not binding, and few men certainly would have been troubled with such scruples on the occasion. But Kant did not stop to reason. He hastily retraced his steps, and walking into the midst of the robbers, who were still in the same place, he said meekly, "I have told you what is not true; but fear and anxiety confused me; therefore pardon me."

With these words, he held forth the pieces of gold; but, to his surprise, not one of the robbers would take them. A strange feeling was at work in their hearts. They could not laugh at the pious man. "Thou shalt not steal," said a voice within them. All were deeply moved. Then, as if seized by a sudden impulse, one went and brought back his purse; another restored the book of prayer, while still another led his horse towards him and helped him to re-mount it. They then entreated his blessing; and solemnly giving it, the good old man continued his way, lifting up his heart in gratitude to God, who brought him in safety to the end of his journey.

A MARTYRDOM STORY.

IN the town of Antioch, two men—Sapricius and Nicephorus—the first holding office in the church, the other a layman, had been united in the closest friendship. But some little difference between them grew to a quarrel, so that they would not even salute one another in the street. At last Nicephorus felt himself

to be in fault, and made repeated attempts to be reconciled to his friend, even going to his house, throwing himself at his feet, and entreating forgiveness for the Lord's sake. But Sappricius was obstinate and haughtily refused his petition.

Then came the days of sudden and sore persecution (Valerian's reign), when every man's faith was tried as by fire. Sappricius was carried before the governor, and ordered to offer idolatrous sacrifice. He boldly refused and avowed his faith. "Perish, idols," he cried, "which can neither do good nor harm!" After being tortured he was ordered to be beheaded. Nicephorus, hearing of this, ran up to him as they were leading him away, and implored him not to leave the world without extending forgiveness to his penitent friend. He prayed in vain; yet notwithstanding the scorn and ridicule of the executioners, he persevered in following to the place of death, and there renewed his entreaties, pleading the very words of the Lord, "Ask and it shall be given you." How proud and how hard the heart must have been which at such an hour could still remain cold and unrelenting!

A strange scene followed, in which we see plainly the righteous judgment of God. The courage of Sappricius suddenly gave way before the immediate prospect of death: he recanted and promised to sacrifice to the idols. His distressed friend, in much amazement, in vain exhorted him to constancy. Then, as if by an irresistible impulse, he turned to the executioner and exclaimed, "I believe in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, whom he hath renounced." And he bravely submitted to the death from which the other had shrunk faithlessly back. Thus the last was made first, and the first last, and a lesson was left to succeeding generations of how those who proudly refuse pardon to an erring brother can never expect support or mercy in their own hour of need from Him, who in dying prayed for His murderers, and Who tells us to forgive one another "until seventy times seven." If Sappricius lived to repent, how humbling, how overwhelming his self-reproach and remorse must have been!

HELP ONE ANOTHER.

A POOR lame boy was walking along one of the muddy streets of the city, trying to find a suitable place to cross. The heavy rains had fallen, and the street was unusually deep with mud and water.

While waiting to cross, another lad saw him, and cried out, "Stop! stop! I'll carry you over!"

In a moment he gently took the little cripple in his arms, and carried him over to the opposite side of the street. In doing it he got quite wet and muddy; but he did not mind that, for he felt amply repaid by the *inward reward* which his heart gave him. The little lame boy smiled gratefully, and thanked him kindly, but the pleasure of doing a kind act paid him better. Doing good to others brings its own reward, which the selfishness of the world cannot appreciate.

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Help one Another.

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THE GRATEFUL TIGER.

By Isabel Thorne.



MOST boys and girls have heard the story of Androcles, the slave who took the thorn out of the lion's paw, and how his old friend recognised him and would not hurt him when he was afterwards caught and condemned to be given to the lions. I cannot tell whether this story is true, though it is very old; but not long ago something happened which reminded me of it. The tiger at the Dublin Zoological Gardens fell ill, would not eat, and became very thin; he could scarcely walk, and the keeper soon found that there was something the matter with his paw. You know what sleek, handsome creatures tigers are, and how they like to walk constantly backwards and forwards, in their dens; and some of you may have seen a tiger yawn and show his great teeth, which are able to crunch up the strongest bones. A tiger's paw is very like a cat's paw, and you know pussy sheaths her sharp claws in the soft pad of her foot and only stretches them out when she wishes to scratch. The Dublin tiger's paw was looked at, and it was soon seen that the claws were growing into the pad of his foot, making it very tender and painful. But what was to be done? If the claws were left, they would make the foot worse and worse; and yet it was not an easy matter to cut them out, for that would hurt the tiger very much at the time, and he would be sure to be savage and try to kill every one around him, for he could not know that it was being done for his good. At last it was arranged that seven men should hold him with ropes, and that his sore paw should be caught in a noose and drawn under an iron grating, so that the surgeon might be able to reach it easily. Well, the tiger let the men put the rope round his neck, but kept them a long time before they could fasten it round his paw, for as soon as it

was on, and before it could be drawn tight, he tossed it up into the air: but the men persevered, and at last the poor tiger was safely bound and the surgeon began to cut. The tiger did not know what was being done for him, and the pain made him very angry; he tried to strike at the surgeon with his great paw, but the gentleman had a strong iron cage over his arm to protect him from the blows. Then the tiger tried to catch him in his powerful jaws; when he found he could not do that, he seized hold of the iron bars of his den so fiercely that he broke two of his long pointed teeth. When the claws were cut out of the foot the ropes were undone, and some water was thrown over him to cool him, and the tigress was let into the den: she bounded in and went up to the tiger, licking his sore foot and plainly showing that she was very sorry for him. The tiger soon found that the pain in his paw was better.

Now comes the part of this true story that reminds me of Androcles and his lion. About half an hour afterwards the gentleman who cut the claws went up to the front of the cage: the tiger recognised him directly, and appeared to know that he owed his relief from pain to him; for, instead of trying to knock him down or eat him up, he came to the bars of his den purring gently, and put down his great head to be patted by his doctor, and so tried to show, as much as a tiger could, that he was grateful for what had been done for him. You see present pain often brings future happiness, for there are many things which seem very hard to bear and yet they are sent for our good. I think you could find some texts in the Bible which would tell you this.

THE WHITE HEATH.

MARIA BEST was the daughter of a small farmer in Surrey. She had a little brother named Arthur, whom she used to nurse and take care of when her mother was busy. She had also an elder brother named Fred, who had gone to Australia, but they had not heard from him for a long time. Maria was very fond of flowers, and when her mother gave

little Arthur to Maria to take care of, she used to carry him into the wood close by her father's farmyard; then she would put her little brother down, and gather him a nosegay to play with. Often she would take a nosegay to the Rectory to Mrs. Irving, the Rector's wife, who was very fond of her, and taught her the names of many flowers.

Every year there was a cottage flower-show at Homewood, and the children had a prize given them for the best posy of wild flowers they could bring. One day, about a week before the show, Mrs. Irving met Maria in the wood; the little girl was carrying her brother, who had his flowers in his hand. Maria asked him to give them to Mrs. Irving, but he seemed unwilling, and said, in his way of speaking, he was going to get a prize for them. He thought that Mrs. Irving was going to take them, and he ran off home. Maria hastened to catch him, but in her haste the poor child caught her foot against the root of a tree and fell; her knee struck the sharp point of a fir stump, and she was so much hurt that she fainted with pain. Mrs. Irving raised her up, and poured some cold water on her face, and revived her, and helped her home. Maria suffered much. All her hope of the prize was gone. The poor child was doubly disappointed, because she knew of some beautiful white heath, which she felt sure would set off her nosegay so well; and then she intended afterwards to give the flowers to Mrs. Irving. Now she could neither get the flowers, nor have the pleasure of giving them.

Little Arthur would often go out and gather flowers and bring them in, for he knew where to find them, as he went so often with his sister. Most of the flowers grew close by the cottage, but the heath was at least a quarter of a mile off. No one knew where this white heath grew but Arthur and herself, and Maria was too ill to get up. "If Arthur could find it," she said, "I am sure he would get the prize, for he has brought me all the other flowers himself." She did not know how to make the little boy understand what it was she wanted.

However, on the morning of the flower-show day Maria's father had lost a lamb out of his fold, and he went to look for it. Arthur seeing him, ran to go with his father. They had not gone very long before the lamb was found, and Mr. Best caught it. Arthur now was on the ground, and all of a sudden he called out "Sissie fower! sissie petty fower! Artie take sissie fower." He then gathered a beautiful bunch of white heath. It was made up with the other flowers; and the first prize for wild flowers was awarded to Arthur Best.

Poor Maria had to lie on the sofa for a long time, but just as the autumn leaves were falling, she was able to get about again; but alas! it was only with the help of crutches. It was a long time before she could get along much even with them. Fortunately the church was very near, and the school close by. Arthur was always with her, and sometimes they would take a little walk together by the side of the wood, on the gravel path, he would run and fetch her flowers, whilst she sat down on a stile, and waited for him. One day to please him, after she had got used to her crutches, she left one of them at home, and tried to walk with one only, so that she might take his hand. She managed to get to the stile, and then sat down to rest. He wanted her to go as far as the white heath again, and he begged so hard that she at last managed to get there; and they brought home a plant and put it in a pot, and anxiously they watched and watered it; but in spite of all their care it did not flourish, and after a few weeks it withered away.

But a far worse trouble came to the little children than the loss of their white heath, their father died. The little farm was given up, and their furniture had to be sold, and after all the expenses had been paid but very little was left. They stayed at Homewood during the winter, and in the spring Mrs. Best and her little boy and lame girl went to live in London, with her sister, and her sister's husband, who was a cab-driver.

Maria went to school every day, but was very timid at first. In time, however, she got quite used to the walk, and was



Arthur and his Flowers.

not afraid of being in London streets alone.

About half way between the school and near her home there was a plant stall,

and close to the stand where her uncle stood with his cab, the little girl so often stopped to look at the flowers that the old man, to whom they belonged, got to



Maria at the Flower Stand.

know her quite well, and sometimes would give her a little piece that might be broken off. One day the gardener had a beautiful white heath, she longed to see the tiniest piece broken off that she might have it, but

there was no broken piece. As she was looking at this plant very attentively, a gentleman stopped and spoke kindly to her, and then he asked the price of the heath, and as it was not much he paid for

it, and turning to Maria, said, "There, my little girl you may have that, as you seem to be so fond of flowers;" and then he jumped into her uncle's cab, which was on the stand close by, and drove away. When he got to the railway station, he said to the cabman, "I suppose you do not know who that poor child is? She reminds me so much in face of some one." "It is my niece, sir," said the cabman. "Indeed!—what is her name?" "Maria Best." The stranger looked surprised, and questioned the cabman further, and found that the lame girl was his own sister.

The stranger was Frederick Best, who had returned from Australia with plenty of money, and was going by train to Homewood to find his family. When he heard the cabman's story, he drove back to his house, and there found his mother shedding tears over the white heath, which reminded her so much of the old times.

But her tears were quickly turned into joy and wonder at the way in which God had brought back her son, and soon brighter days came for her and Arthur, and the little lame girl.

W. M.

SCENES IN THE LIFE OF ST. PETER.

ST. PETER WITH CHRIST ON THE SHORE OF TIBERIAS.

St. John, xxi. 1-17.



THE last scene in St. Peter's life, which we pictured to you, was a very sad one. He fell deeper and deeper into the dark pit of sin. He slept when he should have watched and prayed. He followed afar off, when he should have been near his Lord; then, in the hall of the high-priest's palace he disowned Him, and at last denied Him with oaths and curses.

In the scene we have now to paint in words, we are to see the apostle rising

out of the dark pit of sin, and restored to the light of his master's favour and forgiveness.

The agonies of the Cross now are over. The sacred body of Jesus has been given to Joseph of Arimathea, who had wrapped it in linen, and laid it in a sepulchre which was hewn out of a rock.

The Jewish Sabbath on which Jesus lay in the grave is over, and very early in the morning the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and two other women came to the sepulchre, and in it they saw an angel, and were affrighted. But he saith to them, *Be not affrighted; ye seek Jesus of Nazareth, which was crucified. He is not here; He is risen; behold the place where they laid Him. But go your way: tell His disciples and Peter that He goeth before you into Galilee; there shall ye see Him, as He said unto you.* (St. Mark, xvi. 6, 7.) The women did as they were told, and Mary Magdalene runneth and cometh to Simon Peter, and to the other disciple whom Jesus loved, and saith unto them, *They have taken away the Lord out of the sepulchre, and we know not where they have laid Him.* (John, xx. 2.)

Then Peter and John ran, both together, and John, who was the younger, outran Peter and got first to the sepulchre, but he only looked in: but Peter, when he came up, *went boldly into the sepulchre and seeth the linen clothes lie, and the napkin that was about His head not lying with the linen clothes, but wrapped together in a place by itself.*

It has been well said that this napkin wrapped together—folded up, as we should say—gives us the notion of *human hands*, and also suggests that there was no haste or struggle when Jesus left the prison-house of Satan and of death.

After our Lord's rising from the grave, St. Peter saw our Lord at Jerusalem; but as in these scenes he does not stand out from the other apostles, we will rather pass to one in which he does. One evening a group of Galilean fishermen were on the shore of the Lake of Tiberias. There were together Simon Peter and six other disciples of Jesus. *Simon Peter saith unto them, I go a-fishing. They say unto him,*

We also go with thee ; and they at once got into their boat and pushed out into the deep water. But they might as well have stayed on shore, for that night they caught nothing.

At daybreak Jesus stood on the shore, but the disciples knew not that it was Jesus. Perhaps the light of early morning was still too dim for them to see His features, as He hailed them from the shore, and said to them, Children, have ye any meat ? They answered Him, No. He said unto them, Cast the net on the right side of the ship, and ye shall find. They did so, and enclosed so many fishes that they were not able to draw in their net again.

The miracle shows them who the stranger is. John saith to Peter, *It is the Lord.*

Peter, who was by nature quick to act and speak, girt his fisher's coat round him, cast himself into the sea, and swam to Jesus, while the others came in their boat, *dragging the net with fishes.* As soon as they were come to land they saw a fire of coals there, and fish laid thereon, and bread. Then Jesus invited them to come and eat, and with His own hands He gave them of the food that He had prepared for them.

When they had eaten, Jesus said to Peter, *Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these ?* More than these your fellow-disciples do ; for Peter, a few days before, had claimed a purer love than any of the others, saying, "Though all shall deny thee, yet will not I."

But now he has learnt from his sad fall to be more distrustful of himself, and he only answered, *Yea, Lord, thou knowest that I love thee !* Jesus saith unto him, *Feed my lambs.*

A second time Jesus asked the same question, and Peter gave the same answer, and his Master saith to him, *Feed my sheep !*

And yet a third time Jesus said, *Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me ?* Peter was grieved because *He said unto him the third time, Lovest thou me ?* and he answered, *Lord, thou knowest all things, thou knowest that I love thee.* Jesus saith unto him, *Feed my sheep !*

Even a child-reader can think of a reason why Jesus should ask St. Peter the question three times, for was it not three times that Peter had denied his Master in the high-priest's palace ; and Jesus most likely wished to remind him of that sad threefold denial, and also to lead him to make a threefold confession.

And Jesus thus publicly restored St. Peter to the place from which by his sin he had fallen, and gave him charge equally with the other apostles to feed the lambs and the sheep of His flock.

St. Peter was to feed the sheep—that means he was to teach and comfort those who were mature and full-grown disciples, with the holy words that Jesus had taught him, and would bring to his remembrance by His Spirit.

And he was to feed Christ's lambs, too—not only those who are young in years, but those also who are young in grace. Jesus does not forget the little ones of His flock. He loves to *gather the lambs in His arms, and carry them in His bosom.* (Isaiah, xl. 2.) And He wishes all ministers and teachers to care for them likewise. So, after He was risen from the grave, He said to St. Peter on the shore of the Sea of Galilee, *Feed my lambs !*

May all our little readers be in the number of the lambs of Jesus !

The lambs of Jesus ! who are they ?
But children that believe and pray ;
Who keep God's laws, and ask His grace,
And seek a heavenly dwelling-place.

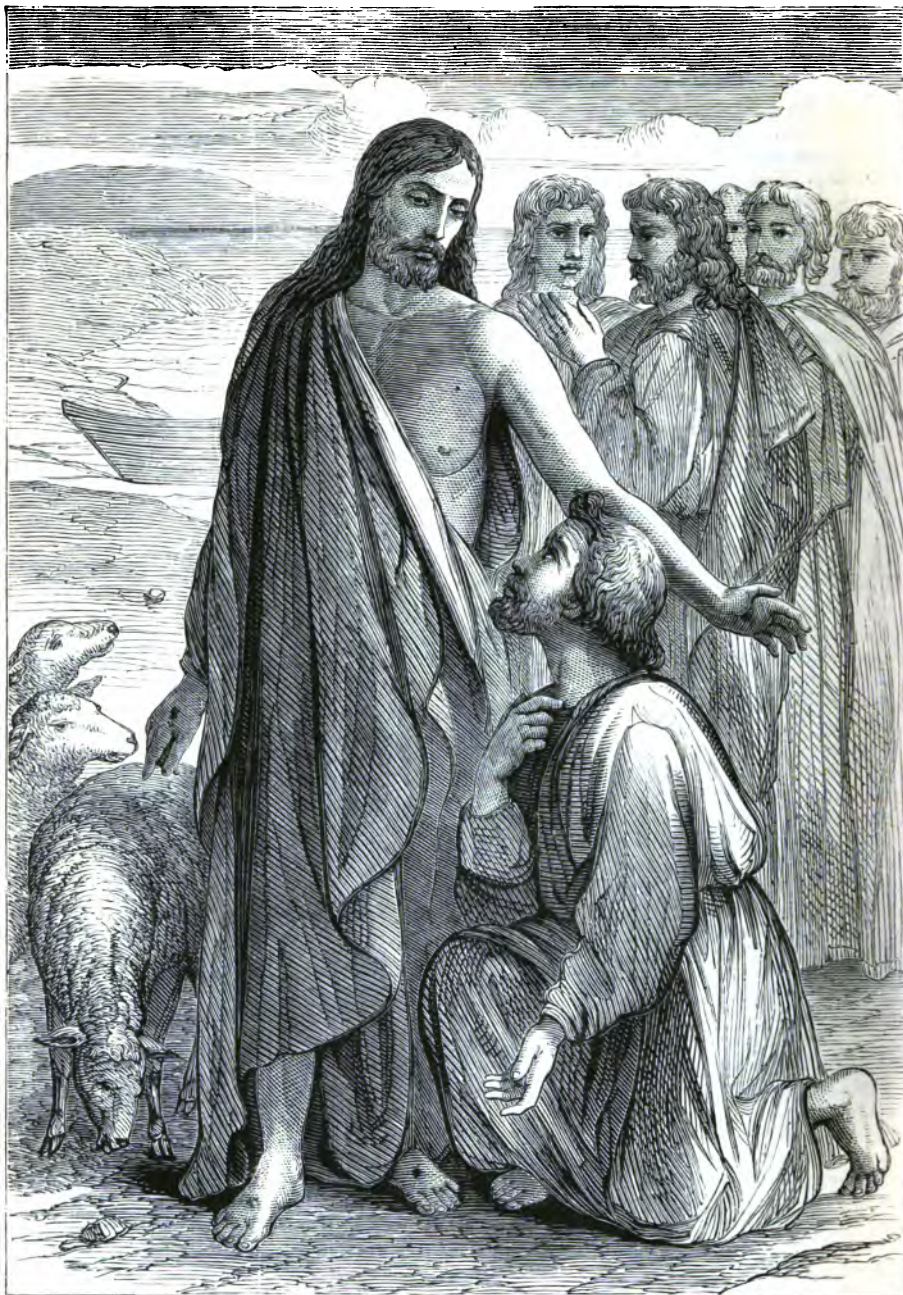
The lambs of Jesus ! they are meek ;
The words of truth and peace they speak ;
To all God's creatures they are kind,
And, like their Lord, of heavenly mind.

The lambs of Jesus ! oh ! that we
Might of that happy number be !—
Lord, bless us early with Thy love,
And lead us to Thy fold above.

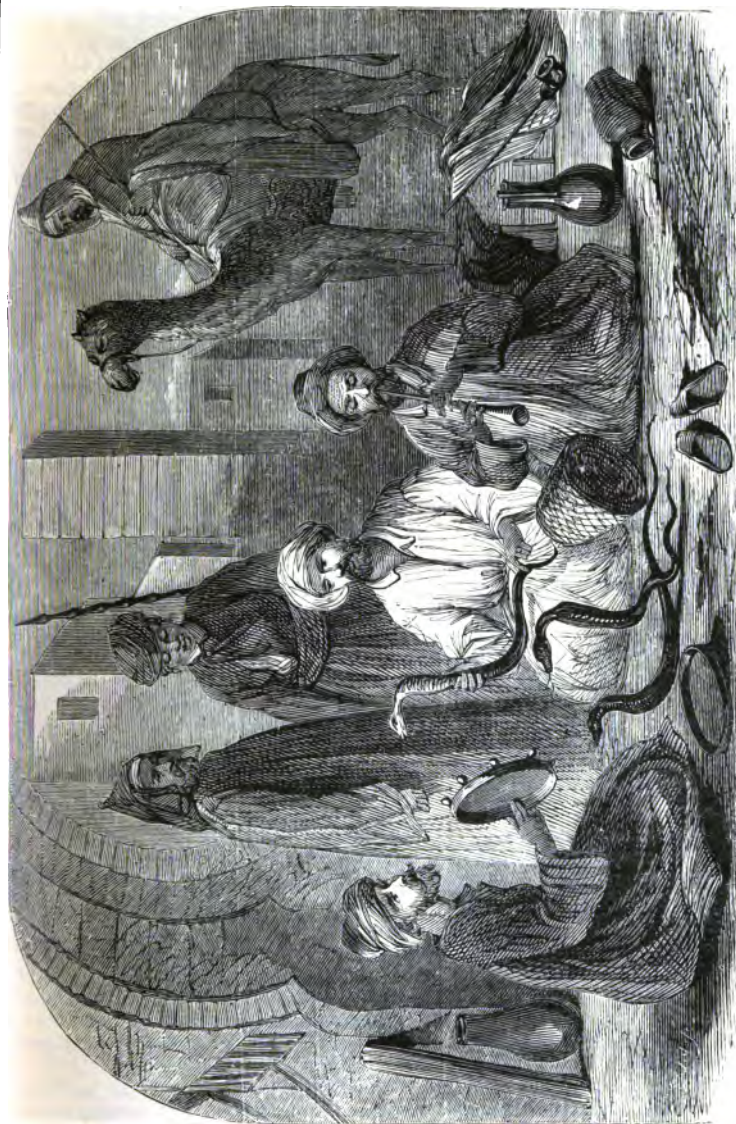
SPEAK KINDLY.

THERE'S many an arrow at random sent,
Finds aim the archer little meant ;
There's many a word at random spoken,
May wound or soothe a heart already broken.

Scott.



"Feed my Sheep."



SNAKE CHARMERS.

WE can remember having been often puzzled in church, when Sunday fell on the eleventh day of the month, at the words in one of the Psalms for the day, the lviith, which, speaking of the ungodly, says, "*They are like the*

devi adder that stoppeth her ears, which refuseth to hear the voice of the charmer, charm he never so wisely." What was then a mystery to us in those words became afterwards clear, as we heard and read of "serpent charming."

The verse shows that the practice must have been common in those days, just as it is now. Indeed, it is probably much older even than the time of King David. Some suppose that the rods which the magicians of Egypt cast down before Pharaoh, and which became serpents like that of Aaron, were merely tricks of the serpent-charmers of that time; but "Aaron's serpent swallowed all the rest," and proved the miracle to be from God. (See Exod. vii. 10-12.)

The practice is still common in most countries of the East, where the jugglers are very cunning, but by what means they obtain the power over venomous snakes, so as to be able to use them for these purposes, is not known.

The picture represents some of the snake-charmers of Morocco, North Africa, practising in the public street. The following account of the performance is given by one who saw it:—"The men first seated themselves on the ground, and two musicians, a piper and a tambourine-player, began a slow, dull air. The tune gradually increased in rapidity, till the snake-charmer was ready. Ere long, the flat, spade-like head of a snake appeared from a basket, and freeing itself it began to dance, rising and drooping its crest to the changes of the tune. The charmer then placed a small chicken before the snake, which bit at it in a moment. The chicken staggered and fell in two minutes. He then wound the snake about his neck, and put it afterwards into his bosom." Sometimes these men contrive to make it appear that they themselves have been bitten by the snake. They will be seen then to swallow something, apparently as a remedy, and fall backwards as if dead. In a few minutes, however, they will recover, and be ready for a second performance. They have also been seen to put the head of the snake into their mouth, calling upon Mahomet at the same time for protection. They use them, too, sometimes as a whip to frighten the bystanders.

The practice prevails also in India to a great extent,—though there the performers are, perhaps, less cunning than in Morocco,

where the teeth of the snake, which contain the poison, are taken out first. In India this is not so,—at least not always, as there have been many cases in which the charmer himself has died from the bite of the snake he has been performing with.

Of course, when the poison of the snake is removed, the creature is harmless. The poison lies in the teeth, and the words in the Psalm which follow the comparison of the ungodly to the deaf adder, "*Break their teeth, O God, in their mouths,*" may be a figurative prayer that the venom of sin may be removed, and the ungodly men may be tamed and subdued. B.



"I'M JUST AS UNHAPPY AS I CAN BE,"

LITTLE girl said to herself, one autumn evening, as she was passing a long covered bridge. "I'm real mad about it, and I think it's very mean that I can't have it." Bessie thought she was alone on the bridge, and she started in alarm when she heard a voice say, "Little girl, come back, and let me speak to you."

The voice was so pleasant, that the child turned back, and a few steps from her, resting on a beam, sat a small woman, with bent form and wrinkled face, who asked, "Will you tell me your trouble?"

"My mother won't buy a new cloak that I want, just like Mary Cloud's, and I want it so much," said Bessie.

"What is the matter with this cloak that you now are wearing? it is warm, and very pretty."

"Oh it's all dark in here and you can't see. It's dreadfully old-fashioned, and looks so bad beside Mary's pretty new one."

"Why will not your mother get you one? tell me that, little girl."

"She says that this cloak is perfectly good, and that Harry, my cousin, whose father and mother are dead, needs all the money she can spare this winter."

"Has he an overcoat to wear?"

Bessie laughed. "Why, he is a little boy not big enough to go out alone, if he could walk, and he can't walk one step, and perhaps he never will."

"Would you like to take his place, and have just what he has?"

"No, not for anything."

"Would you like to be me, and carry this big basket a mile?"

"Would I like to be you?" said Bessie.

"Why, no; you are old, and most ready to die; and I guess you are lame, by the way you are resting. No, I don't want to be you."

"Well, now, little girl, do you know that I would not be you—that I would not change my feeble body and my wrinkled face, and my faded clothes for your young face and bright looks and your home; and yet I am, as you said, near death; and I haven't anyone to take care of me, as you have."

"Why not?" almost gasped Bessie in astonishment.

"Because I don't wish to be unhappy, nor mad, nor do I wish to think I have a mean mother."

"Oh," said Bessie, "I don't. Mother is very kind to me, and she is so good to Harry; but do you like to be old and wrinkled and lame, and to have no home?"

"Yes, I like all these things, because God sent them. He has let me live so many years to try and do a little good, and I have tried. These wrinkles that you dislike so much are nothing to me but signs that I am soon going home; and I have a little girl in heaven just the size that you are."

"Was she naughty, like me?" asked Bessie.

"She died a great many years ago. I remember that she was naughty sometimes; but she was always sorry for it, and asked God to forgive her; and when she went away to heaven, she was very glad to go."

"Glad to die?"

"Yes, little girl, glad for anything that God sent. Now go home, and be thankful that you are young and strong, and have such a comfortable cloak to wear,

and don't say again that you are unhappy or mad, for only sin can make people unhappy. Now good-bye, and don't forget me. I've a long way to go, and my basket is heavy."

Bessie watched the little woman as she slowly went her way through the bridge.

"Oh dear me, I am so thankful for what I have, I won't mind not having the cloak any more," thought Bessie; and she truly intended to remain thankful to the end of her days.

HINGES ALL OVER.

A CONVERTED native of the South Sea Islands was once trying to give an account of the manner in which he persuaded himself that the Bible was the Word of God. "When I look at myself," he said, "I find I have got hinges all over my body. I have hinges in my legs, my jaws, my feet, my hands. If I want to lay hold of anything, there are hinges in my hands, and even to my fingers, to do it with. If my heart thinks, and I want others to think with me, I use the hinges to my jaws, and they help me to talk. I could neither walk nor sit down if I had not hinges to my legs and feet. All this is very wonderful. None of the strange things that men have brought from England in their big ships are to be at all compared to my body. He who made my body has made all the clever people who have made the strange things which they bring in ships; and He is the God whom I worship. But I should not know much more about Him than that He is a great hinge-maker, if men in their ships had not brought the book they call the Bible. That tells me of God who made the heart of man likewise. And when I hear how the Bible tells of the old heart with its corruptness, and the new heart and a right spirit, which God alone can create and give, I feel that His work in my heart and His work in my body fit it into each other exactly. I am sure, then, that the Bible which tells me these things was made by Him who made the hinges to my body. And I believe the Bible to be the Word of God."



THE CHILD AND THE FLOWERS.

PRETTY little flowers, that blow
Where the grass is soft and low—
Daisies white and tipped with red;
Violets, on your leafy bed;
Cowslips, bending on your stalk;
Primroses, beside the walk—
Who has made you fair and sweet,
Growing thus beneath my feet?

Surely he must loving be,
Who made such tender things as ye."

" Little children, would you know
Who has made us live and grow,
Who has given our pleasant smell,
Who has kept us all so well,
Who has given us beauty thus,
Though no gardener cares for us?
Listen while I simply tell,
Of Him who 'doeth all things well.'"

God created us at first,
Before the earth for sin was curst;
And every day our need supplies,
And guards us with His watchful eyes.
Oh! when your little hands ye spread
To pluck us from our lowly bed,

Well pleased our varied forms to spy,
Remember He is ever nigh;
And think, if thus His tender care
Has made the meanest flower so fair,
How surely He will keep and bless
The little children's helplessness."



THE INDIAN MAIL.

WE do not intend by this title any reference to the great steam-ships, which twice a-month leave Southampton with the Indian letters, but to a much more humble thing,—the mail as it is in India itself.

The Indian mail-cart is of native manufacture, and is made as light as possible for rapid speed. It must be hot work for the driver, and more so for the horse, if he is made to gallop like the one in the picture.

The natives of India are by nature sluggish and slow, and the mail-cart flying by them, with its clouds of dust, must be an awakening sight. Still more wonderful must it appear to the animals of the jungle, who retreat from its approach in alarm.

The arrival of a mail is a pleasant thing in India, for it brings home-news to hard-working Englishmen in the different Government stations and towns up the country. Relatives and friends thus talk to each

other, and "as cold water to a thirsty soul so is good news from a far country."

The primitive mode of carrying letters by the mail-cart is becoming a thing of the past in parts of India. Some thousands of miles of railway are now in use, and letters are sent from Calcutta to Delhi and the Punjab—2000 miles—by 'mail train,' under care of a regular guard. Railways also branch out from Bombay and Madras, and in a few years the mail-cart will only be used in out-of-the way districts.

We all of us think postage very cheap in England, but it is still cheaper in India. A letter can be sent from north to south, 2000 miles, for a half-anna (three farthings); that is, if it be adorned with that blue postage stamp well known to all collectors, where Queen Victoria's head appears within an oval, bearing the words, "East India postage—Half-anna." W.

BRASS BUTTONS.

(Continued from p. 84.)

ARCHIE'S heart was beating loud and fast, and his burning eyes felt as if they had forgotten all about the previous tears. He hardly understood what his master had said, but a vague sense that he was not to be punished, though he had deserved punishment, came over him. This kindness touched the boy more than any severity could have done; he turned to his slate again, but was too frightened by all that had passed—his own violence more especially—to go on with his sum. He did try very hard, for he felt how terribly like abuse of kindness another failure would look; but it was all in vain, and when at last the order to "put away" was given, it was an immense relief that the sum was not even asked for.

Archie was the last in the room, he lingered in hopes that he might have a chance of telling his master he was sorry. But before he had time to say a word, a hand was laid on his head.

"My boy," said Mr. Cooper, "are you not man enough to bear a little teasing? 'Be strong, quit you like men' should not have been written in vain for any one of us."

"Oh, sir," said Archie, "I am so sorry! I don't think it would have happened if Mrs. Cooper and Harry had been in the room."

The kind face quivered a little as Mr. Cooper said,—

"You must not depend upon them, Vaughan; Harry is seldom well enough to come here twice a-day, and Mrs. Cooper stays with him. And I don't know that it isn't better for you, Vaughan," he added, with a little, half-sad smile: "I think you ought to 'work out' your own cure. And remember, I cannot again overlook such an outbreak of temper as we had to-day. Now, good-bye: I shall tell Harry how much you are wanting him."

Archie went, feeling more light-hearted than he could have believed possible after so disastrous a day; and the kind-hearted master looked with a sigh after the little boy who was destined to pass through the fiery trials of bullying.

Mr. Cooper knew well that no open interference on his part would be for Archie's good, for he had found out that a bully—checked in public by his master—always doubles the torments of his victim in private.

And that night Archie, rejoicing in the thought that there was no harm in a fellow's sneaking about himself, told his mother all about the day's failures (making, however, no mention of the boy who had caused those failures), and went to sleep comforted and penitent, feeling strong and brave as regarded the morrow.

But, alas! the morrow was very much like the day before, if indeed it was not worse. Jack Armstrong showed plainly that he had by no means forgotten yesterday's blow, and Archie had the miserable consciousness of deserving all that he received. He tried to bear it all patiently; but, oh! it was very hard when the lessons so carefully learnt at home with his mother's help, were returned with a "very imperfect," and Archie knew all the time that, but for Jack Armstrong's interruptions, they would have been said without missing a word.

This went on from week to week. Repeated failures were making the boy irritable and almost despairing; his very home seemed somehow to be injured by Jack Armstrong's influence. Day after day his mother asked him what had become of the brass buttons which had been wrenched off by his tryant; day after day he saw her pained look as he evaded her questions. Night after night, as she sat sewing on fresh buttons, and wondering why her child refused her his confidence, that child was sobbing himself to sleep upstairs, praying God to make him feel less cross every day, to keep him from being a sneak, and never, never, never let his mother think he loved her less.

"What shall I do? what shall I do?" mourned the poor boy through the dark-

ness: "if I could only tell mother and beg her to take me from school; but then I should be a baby as well as a tell-tale. O God, keep me from hating Jack Armstrong!"

Those brass buttons, how he had grown to detest them, to hate the very sight of them. How he wished they might never be renewed, that never fresh ones were sewed on the bald places which he daily brought from school. Had not they been as instruments of torture to him? Had not Jack Armstrong once stood over him one long play-hour—with a pretence of fun in which all except he and Archie believed—telling him he should swallow one? Had not, at last, blow followed blow on the tired head of the unresisting child, whilst the two Browns giggled, and Armstrong junior looked stupidly on, and Harry Cooper lay silent upstairs? Harry, who in the midst of that deadly sickness was thinking of Archie, was praying for Archie; who that very day, turning his white face to the window overlooking the garden, put an end to his friend's torment for the time being, by speaking for the first time for twelve hours, and saying, feebly,—

"Father, go down; they are bullying Vaughan."

Mr. Cooper did go down, and hot and angry asked Armstrong "what he meant by his behaviour?"

"Well, sir," was the ready answer, "I was only having a game with Vaughan; he pretends he can't swallow one of his own buttons, and here's Brown junior says he could manage the whole lot for fourpence."

"Stupid fun!" said the master, vexed at not being able to find any open reason for punishing the boy, who richly deserved it.

"Well, sir, he's always having his buttons loose," said the bully.

Which was not true. But shortly after this one of Archie's buttons was found in a cake-plate inside a cupboard in the school-room. I wonder how all the boys felt when Mr. Cooper produced this plate and began cutting up the large piece of cake which was upon it.

"Boys," he said, "Harry begged me to divide this amongst you, one of you, however, has already helped himself largely; who is it?"

"Not I, sir," was answered in various tones by every boy present, but Archie's voice was the lowest, and Archie's face was crimson. For the unlucky button was rolling about the plate, and he saw it, and knew that every one in the room did so likewise. And when Mr. Cooper handed it to him, simply saying,—

"This is yours, I think, Vaughan," the boy literally wished that the green carpet beneath his feet might split asunder, and the earth open and swallow him up. For he felt as if the burden was greater than he could bear, the struggle fiercer than he could contend against. What was the use of bearing and forbearing, of patience and endurance? His very character was to be taken away, his very honesty questioned.

Did Mr. Cooper think Archie guilty of the theft? Not for one instant. But the boy was firmly convinced in his over-sensitiveness that it was so, and he felt as if heart and spirit were breaking together.

I think the affair would have been looked into, and the real culprit discovered, only Harry Cooper lay dying upstairs, and Harry's father was painfully pre-occupied.

Yes, Harry Cooper was dying,—“Going to the majority” as the people of old called it, passing from the narrow confines of his sick-room to the “many mansions” of a larger “house.” It might be a long “passing away,” the doctor said, but the end was sure, he must die in the early morning-time, whilst “the dew of his youth” was still fresh upon him.

Archie did not know his friend was so ill, and day by day he longed for the face he was never more to see, for the voice he was never more to hear, for the help he was never more to have.

He had only been at school four weeks, but he felt so changed, so old and tired, almost envying Harry upstairs in his quiet room, with his mother always by him. What had been the good of his ever coming to school at all? He had never before felt so stupid, so backward, so bewildered.

He did not know that, all unconsciously, he had been lifted up into a higher school, and was learning by heart life-long lessons. That school in which the martyrs of old were painfully taught, and in which the



"Day after day his mother asked him what had become of the brass button."

martyrs of to-day are still learning their hard tasks. That school of whom the Master and the Teacher is God.

But Archie did not know this, he only felt that in all head knowledge he was going backwards, that in the last month

he had learnt far less at school than he could have done at home free from his tormentor; and how he did wish it were all over,—all over for ever. And all the time God was bringing the end very near.

(To be continued.)

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THE CHILDREN'S PRIZE

No. VIII]

AUGUST, 1867.

[One Penny.



There was a sudden crash."

Page 115.

BRASS BUTTONS.

(Continued from p. 112.)

ONE bright day in February the boys asked leave to play on the Green in front of Mr. Cooper's house, instead of in his garden. The slides were their great attraction, and there were plenty of them, for the hard frost had lasted nearly a month. When they had been on the Green about half-an-hour one of the Browns said,—

"Oh, let's go on the river; it's awfully jolly there; such lots of people, and gingerbread-stalls, and men playing hockey, and everything."

"All right," said Jack Armstrong; "come along, Buttons."

"I don't know if we may," said Archie; "shall I go in and ask Mr. Cooper?"

"No, you shan't 'go in and ask Mr. Cooper,' you little sneak," said Jack Armstrong; "no one has ever forbidden our going, so where's the harm? You aren't in the nursery now; and we're not all such babies as you are."

"I don't suppose there is any harm in it," said Archie wearily, and wishing he were brave enough to say out that he would much rather go home, even though it were to the nursery. But he said nothing, for he was heartily tired of being called "sneak" and "baby" before all the boys.

And when once on the river he forgot all his troubles in intense enjoyment. For it really was very pleasant, though the "gingerbread stalls, and the men playing hockey, and the lots of people," were nowhere to be seen.

"You see it's just about dinner-time," said Brown, in a disappointed tone as he and Archie stood watching a group of gentlemen taking off their skates before leaving the ice, "everybody's gone but those fellows, and they're going now. I wish everybody didn't have dinner just at the same time."

But this grievance was soon forgotten

in the running, jumping, and sliding that followed. Of course Archie's pleasure was a good deal spoiled by the fact that Jack Armstrong was there, and did not forget to torment him. Once he got on a slide just behind Archie, and at the end of it gave him such a push, that down he went, making a star on the ice with the back of his head, and at the same time seeing numberless coloured stars flash before his eyes. Then Jack Armstrong tried to "pick him up by a button;" of course, with no result except that of wrenching off the said button, which was flung a-head with shouts of laughter.

When Archie got up again, Jack Armstrong said, "Why, he's going to cry."

It was not true, but the boys laughed and shouted, "Buttons blubbing," till Archie's cheeks were flaming, and his heart within him was hot with anger.

By this time they had all reached the large stone bridge which spanned the river; under three of the five arches it was quite safe to walk, but the two nearest to the banks were always doubtful, and there was generally, as on this day, a placard hung on the balustrades of the bridge marked "Dangerous."

"Who's afraid to go under the little arch?" shouted Jack Armstrong, "Buttons is the lightest, but of course he hasn't the pluck to go first; now you wouldn't, would you, Buttons? Tell the truth, aren't you afraid?"

"No, I'm not afraid," said Archie, "but what's the good of going? I don't care though," he added, with cheeks that flamed still more, as a titter ran through the group of boys, "I'll go."

Just then a new arrival distracted the attention of all, and as he was important enough to do so, I think he deserves a description. He was an especial friend of Archie's, a little bright-eyed, curly, rough terrier, with the prettiest little head, and the shabbiest little stump of a tail anywhere to be seen. And his name was "Grudge," because he had such a way of coveting anything that he saw anybody eat. He jumped upon Archie, licking his hands, and giving short little barks of delight at the meeting.

"Why, Grudge, what could have brought you here? You must have come all alone," said the boy, feeling as if he had now a home-friend on his side, "We'll go home and get some dinner, that we will, Grudge."

"No, you won't, though," said Jack Armstrong, "at least not till you've earned it;" and catching the dog up he threw him with all his strength right under the little arch.

"Go and fetch him," said the bully; and he got as near to the arch as he dared, threatening the dog with a hockey stick he had picked up.

Grudge whined and looked perplexed, but when Archie called him he ran to the mouth of the arch, only to receive a smart blow on his fore-paw from Jack Armstrong's stick. Then he limped back to the side of the arch, and lay down in the dark shadow; no entreaties or commands of his little master could induce him to move, he only lay there shivering, whining, and lifting his paw piteously whilst he licked it. Archie was half mad with anger and compassion.

"You coward!" he said to the bully, "you'd no business to touch the dog, I'd rather you'd have hit me."

Bitter, wicked thoughts were in his heart, but a sudden remembrance of his home and mother came in time to save him from uttering them. So without saying another word he rushed forward to his little friend. There was a sudden crash, and a frightened cry from the boys, a little dog's sharp terrified yelping, and Archie Vaughan's curly head was lost to sight.

Meantime, at home, Maudie was getting a scolding. Her mother went up to the nursery and found her standing in the middle of the room with both fists squeezed into her eyes. Nurse was scolding.

"Perhaps," said Maudie, "if I shut my eyes very tight I shan't hear her talking."*

"What is the matter, Maudie?" asked her mother.

"Why, ma'am," said nurse, "she is the

naughtiest child anywhere; I brought her home to-day after her walk, and if she didn't slip away whilst I was rubbing my boots on the mat, and was half way up the Green before I could catch her, naughty child."

"Why did you do so, Maudie?"

"Mother," said Maudie, solemnly, taking her fists out of her eyes, "it is thirty-five minutes past one, Archie is very late to-day, and I only went to look for him."

"Twenty-five, you mean, Maudie; but it was very naughty. Why, Grudge, Grudge, what brings you up here?"

"Grudge went with me," said Maudie. "Why, mother, isn't he wet? And he's got one of Archie's buttons in his mouth, and what makes him cry so? Oh, mother, mother, Archie must be in the water somewhere, and Grudge can't get him out." A piteous burst of tears followed.

The same horrible fear had come into her mother's mind, and turning hastily, she left the room, closely followed by the dog. They met Mr. Vaughan on the stairs, and with few words on either side he was soon on his way to the river, Grudge scampering before him. He had half reached it before he was met by one of the terrified Browns, who entreated him to "come on, for Vaughan had had an accident."

Now to return to my poor little hero. It was very, very awful, that sudden plunge into a darkness and coldness as that of death. Archie was only conscious of the rushing of water in his ears, and the terrible feeling of sinking, sinking down. Then he rose again, at least he remembered his head's bumping against something hard at which he strove to grasp vainly. Was his one chance gone? No, for on rising for the second time he *did* catch hold of something solid, and when he had sufficiently recovered found himself clinging to the mainland of the ice, so to speak; he had drifted lower down than the hole he had made for himself, but happily the ice on the other side of the arch (where he now was) was scarcely ice at all, it having been broken up and removed to a neighbouring ice-house. Thus many open spots were made,

* A fact.

through one of which Archie had come up, and it was to this that the little boy owed his preservation.

But his hold on life was still a very slight one, it was so difficult to keep himself up that each moment he expected to slip back into the arms of the black death below him. How he clung on from second

to second he never knew, but thought and feeling returned to him, and he knew all the awfulness of his position. As he looked round, he felt desolate indeed. The ice was completely deserted, no schoolfellow, no friend was near him, even Grudge had forsaken him.

(To be continued.)



SHOOTING THE RAPIDS.

THIS is a very exciting thing to look at in a picture, and a difficult and dangerous thing to do in reality. A Rapid is a torrent caused by rocks in the bed of a river, over which the boat must be passed, and it requires great practice and skill to do it without striking against the rocks.

North-west America is for hundreds of miles a network of lakes and rivers, and so water travelling is the best way of getting

from place to place; but it is only in canoes that voyages can be made. The rivers are all too full of rapids to let a large boat or a small steamer be used.

Long experience of canoe travel has now brought the canoe to a nearly perfect state. Its form must be long and narrow, with both ends pointed, and its bottom round. It consists of a light framework, covered with the bark of the birch-tree, the whole made water-tight with rosin, and provided with seats, paddles, and sometimes a small mast and sail to assist in crossing the lakes.

When going *down* a stream, with the current, the paddlers need not exert themselves much; but when nearing the rapids, they have to take the greatest care to guide the canoe, so that it may avoid the rocks in shooting them. Paddles are here of no use; the whole depends upon the steersman. It is for 'shooting' the rapids that the bottoms of the canoes are made round. The rapids are so numerous in the Rupert's Land rivers that the traveller soon gets used to them.

although he is full of fear at the first attempt.

Coming *up* a stream against the current is a very different thing to going down. This is, indeed, hard work, even where there are not rapids; and when there are rapids, the canoe cannot 'shoot' up them! but before reaching them, the men in the canoe land and haul it out of the water, carry it upon their shoulders past the rapid, and then launch it again, and proceed on their journey.

W.



THE GIRL AND DOVE.

MY father is served by an old henchman,
 My mother by the stately Mistress Ann,
 My brother by a little foot-page so free,
 But this true dove it serveth me !

The old henchman is rude and rough,
 His foot it is heavy, his speech is gruff,
 Whilst Mistress Ann cannot smile if she would,
 With her pursed-up mouth and pinched-up
 hood.

The little foot-page he is bold and vain,
 And he needs as much as the horse the rein ;
 But my true dove it is meek and wise,
 And I read its heart in its gentle eyes.

My father's squire, the Frenchman old,
 He serveth him not for love but gold ;
 And away this day from his hall would flee,
 Could he win but a nobler serving fee.

And the Mistress Ann she would not stay
To wait on my mother one single day,
Although she has served her for many a year,
Were it not for the winning her silken gear.

And that light foot-page with his swinging
feather,
I know what keeps master and man together;
The master has gold in his purse so fair,
And he knows how to spend far better than
spare.

But the dove that was taken from the chestnut
tree,
For nothing but love it serveth me;
I bade it begone on a morn in May,
But it looked in my eyes and begged to stay.

I showed it the woods so green and fair,
I bade it list to the breezy air,
To the coo of the doves, so wild and low,
But it clung to my hand and would not go.

Ay, then let the little foot-page so gay,
Mimic his master as best he may;
Let the Mistress Ann be as grave as an owl,
And the henchman put on his darkest scowl:

I love far better than all the three
The true little dove that serveth me:
That is always merry, and kind, and good,
And hath left for me its own green wood.

MARY HOWITT'S *Sketches of Nat. Hist.*

BLACK BUT BRAVE.

A MASTER-COOPER called upon a black man in Ohio, and wished to purchase some stave timber. The black asked for what purpose he wanted the timber, and received for answer, "I have a contract for a thousand *whisky* barrels."

"Well, sir," was the prompt reply, "I have the timber for sale, and want money, but no man shall buy a stave from me for that purpose."

The cooper was indignant to meet with such stern reproach from a black, and called him a nigger.

"That is very true," mildly replied the other; "it is my misfortune to be a negro: I can't help that; but I can help selling my timber to make *whisky* barrels, and I mean to do it."

SCENES IN THE LIFE OF ST. PETER.

THE HEALING OF THE BEGGAR AT THE BEAUTIFUL GATE OF THE TEMPLE.

Acts, iii. 1-16.



THE Temple which stood in Jerusalem had nine gates: of these one was said to have been made of a very precious metal which was found in a very curious way. When the Romans (146 years before Christ) destroyed Corinth, the most splendid city of Greece, after they had pillaged it, they set it on fire, and hidden treasures of gold, silver, and copper, melted in the intense heat flowed down the streets, and when at length the flames were put out a new metal was found, produced by the mixture in the terrible fire, which could never be made on purpose, and was called "Corinthian brass," and was counted more precious than gold or silver, "The Beautiful Gate" of the Temple was made of this strange metal.

No ancient nations, not even the Jews, had hospitals for their sick, or almshouses for their poor. And so those who had to live by asking the charity of their neighbours sought stations where many persons would see them, and no place could be better than this 'Beautiful Gate,' through which hundreds would constantly pass in and out of the Temple: and a certain man lame from his birth was day by day carried to this spot and laid down close to the way-side.

Once Peter and John went up together into the temple at the hour of prayer, being the ninth hour, that is, at three o'clock in the afternoon, and as they were passing this poor lame man, he asked an *alms* of them; he begged from them, as he had done from hundreds of other persons in the same day. Then Peter, fastening his eyes upon him with John, said, Look on us. The lame man did so expecting to receive something of them. Peter's strange

look of pity would make him expect something more than common—not a mite or a farthing, but perhaps a piece of silver. How disappointed he must have been when Peter said, *Silver and gold have I none.* He may have thought, why does this stranger mock at my sorrow when he is as poor as myself; if he had passed by without noticing me he would have done as many others do, but it was cruel to raise my hopes only to dash them down. But if such thoughts flashed through the lame beggar's mind, the words that Peter was saying would soon remove them: *Silver and gold have I none, but such as I have give I thee: in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk.* Then Peter took him by the right hand and lifted him up, and immediately his feet and ankle bones became quite strong, and leaping up he stood, and walked, and entered with them into the temple, walking and leaping and praising God.

The poor man was above forty years old (Acts, iv. 22), from his very birth he had never had the use of his legs—now in a moment he finds that he can walk; that which children learn to do slowly and by degrees, came to him at once. No wonder that he rejoices in the use of his new-found strength, and that he leaps and bounds along the pavement of the temple as he goes to present his offerings of grateful love to God who had made him whole.

Crowds of people saw this miracle—they had known the man for years as a hopeless cripple, and so when they saw him leaping and walking *they were filled with wonder at that which had happened to him,* and they ran together into one of the courts of the temple called Solomon's porch; and when Peter saw it he went and preached to them, and boldly told them that it was not by any power of their own, but by the power of that very Jesus whom they had crucified that the lame man was cured.

As Peter and John spake to the people even until the evening, the captain of the Temple, with the Sadducees (who said that there is no resurrection), came upon them, being grieved that they preached

through Jesus the resurrection of the dead; and they carried them off to prison. The next day, the two apostles were brought before the great council to answer the question—*By what power, or by what name have ye done this?*

Then Peter, filled with the Holy Ghost, declared boldly, that it was by the name of Jesus Christ whom *they* had crucified; whom God had raised from the dead, that the man stood before them whole.

The chief priests and rulers were confounded, they could make no reply—the miracle was too plain for them to deny it. They dared not punish the apostles for fear of the people; they could only threaten them, and command them *not to speak at all, or teach in the name of Jesus.* But Peter and John answered and said unto them, *Whether it be right in the sight of God, to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye.* For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard. (Acts, iv. 19, 20.)

From this scene in St. Peter's life we may learn two good lessons; a lesson of thankfulness from the lame man, who was not so carried away with joy at his unexpected healing, as to forget to go and give thanks at once to God: and so we should give thanks to God for all our pleasures, whether little or great, and by whose hand soever they may be given to us.

And we should also learn a lesson of holy boldness from the conduct of the apostles before the council, and we too should ask God to put His Spirit within us, that we may not fear to show that we are the soldiers and servants of Jesus Christ, even when in the presence of His enemies.

A CLERGYMAN at Sheffield asked some children, "Why do we say in the Lord's Prayer, 'Who art in Heaven,' since God is everywhere?" He saw a little drummer who looked as if he could give an answer, and turned to him for it: "Well, little soldier, what say you?" "Because it's head-quarters!"



"In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk.



"Teach me in childhood's early hour
To love Thy name to fear thy power."

A CHILD'S MORNING HYMN.

NOW the sun is in the skies,
From my bed again I rise;
Christ, Thou never-setting Sun,
Shine on me, Thy little one.

Watch me through the coming day,
Guard me in my work and play;
Christ, my Master,—Christ, the Child,
Make me like Thee, Jesu mild.

Christ, Almighty King above,
Thee I pray for all I love;
Christ, who lovest more than I,
Help them from Thy throne on high.

Christ, of Mary born for me,
To Thy Name I bow the knee;
Saviour, bring us by Thy grace
To thy happy dwelling-place.

Amen.

R. F. L.

A CHILD'S EVENING HYMN.

DAY is past and gone,
Darkness hastens on;
Jesu Christ, in mercy keep
Angel guards around Thy sheep.

Work again is o'er,
Rest has come once more;
Jesu Christ, forgive, I pray,
All that we have sinned to-day!

I will lay my head
Down upon my bed,
Jesu Christ, in love be near,
So shall I no danger fear.

Soon in silence deep
God will give me sleep;
Jesu Christ, be Thou my light,
In the watches of the night.

When the night is past,
And I wake at last,
Jesu Christ, who lovest me,
Make Thy child to follow Thee.

Amen.

R. F. L.

TWO AND ONE.

TWO ears and only *one mouth* have you,
The reason, I think, is clear:
It teaches, my child, that it will not do
To *talk* about all you *hear*.

Two eyes and only *one mouth* have you,
The reason of this must be,
That you should learn that it will not do
To *talk* about all you *see*.

Two hands and only *one mouth* have you,
And it is worth while repeating;
The *two* are for work you will have to do,
The *one* is enough for eating.



THE HARVEST MOUSE.

IN the December number of the *Children's Prize* I told you about the smallest bird in England, the Golden-crested Wren. Now, I wish to say something about the smallest quadruped. I dare say you know that a quadruped is an animal with four legs, like a horse, a dog, or an elephant. The smallest quadruped in England is the little harvest-mouse. There is only one other four-footed animal in the whole world that is known to be less in size, namely, the Etruscan Shrew-mouse, sometimes found in Italy and Algeria. This tiny creature is only two inches and a half long, including its tail; without its tail it is but one inch and a half. The harvest-mouse is a little larger than this small animal, measuring from the tip of its nose to the end of its tail about four inches and a quarter. It is so light that you might put two of them on a letter-weight, and they would not be heavier than a letter you could send for a penny, that is, half-an-ounce. It is a most delicate-looking little creature. Its back is reddish-brown, like a squirrel's, and its stomach pure white, so that when Mousie sits upon his hind-legs to brush his face with his fore-paws, he looks as if he wore a brown coat and a white waistcoat. The ears are short, and the body and head very slender.

The most curious thing about this little mouse is the strange nest it makes. Sometimes, by the side of a path or in a field, two of these pretty mice choose three or four strong stalks of grass or corn, or the head of a thistle, and these they make the scaffolding for their house, running up the stalks with bits of dry grass, which they interlace till they have made a round ball of loose basket-work, of which the stalks of corn and grass are the pillars.

No one has seen harvest-mice building a nest, but as it has no opening it is supposed that one little mouse works on the inside while the other fetches the grass for that one to plait with, and when

the round ball is nearly finished, the mouse inside pushes her way through the loose wall and re-arranges it from the outside. The nest is a little larger than a cricket-ball : it generally holds eight blind naked little ones, and it is so firmly, though loosely, plaited together, that you may roll the nest, with the young mice inside, across the table without hurting them. Young mice are not pretty before their fur grows; the skin is very pink, and they remind one of little shrimps with long tails.

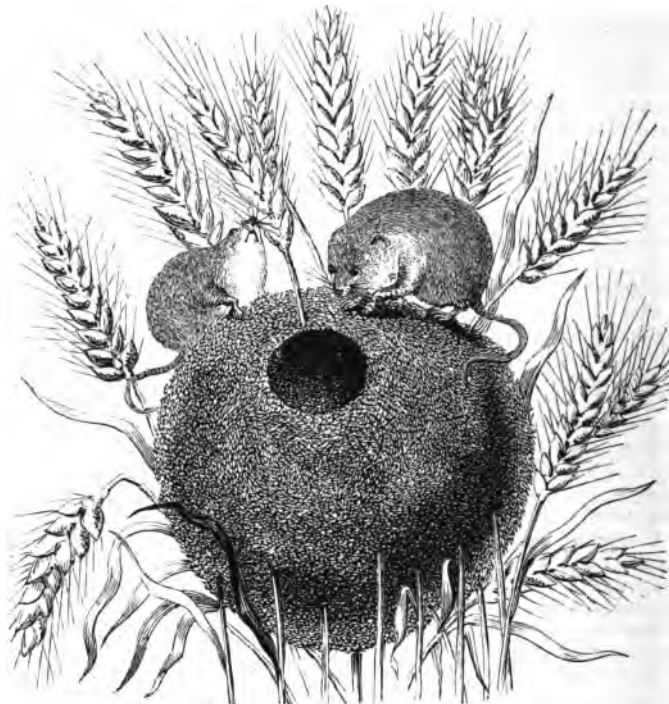
The parent-mice build this airy cradle only to rear their little ones in. They do not begin it till the middle of the summer. If they are hungry while they are at work they run up the stalk, nibble away at the growing ear, and when they have finished their dinner go back to their work. I fancy the reason they make this airy cradle, which is rocked by the breeze every time the wind sweeps over the field, is to keep their little ones out of the reach of rats, hedgehogs, or stoats. The mice can run up the corn-stalks as if they were ladders, but heavier animals cannot reach high enough to get at the young mice. When these are grown up, winter comes on, and the mice set to work once more to make a home; this time they dig a hole in the ground, and spread a bed of soft dry grass at the bottom; so that, you see, they have a summer house and a winter house, one in the air, and the other in the ground; but the place the harvest-mouse likes best for its winter home is just under the eaves of a stack of corn, and there great numbers may sometimes be found. Wherever it settles for the cold season of the year it lays up a store of corn, carefully biting out the growing part, so that there is no chance of the grain sprouting. Thus the prudent little mouse lays by for the winter time, just as the ant has been said to do. You know that Solomon tells the idle man to go to the ant and learn to be industrious like her; so we may all learn from the mouse, and from many other of the beautiful creatures our Heavenly Father has made, to think for the future, and to use well the opportunities He gives us.

It was in Essex that I first saw a nest

of the harvest-mouse. It was built, as I have already described, on some stalks of corn. The little ones were gone, though there was no particular opening, but the loose basket-work can easily be pushed on one side, especially when the little ones are full-grown, and have stretched it well; people have often wondered how the mother can get to her baby mice, who lie so closely packed up within; I expect she runs over the nest, and goes first to one and then another, separating the grass, to do so.

A gentleman, Mr. Bingley, once had a harvest-mouse given him, which he put into a cage. For a long time it was very shy, but when everything was quite quiet it would come out of its hiding-place, and climb about the wires. Its tail curled round the bars, just as you have seen the monkeys at the Zoological Gardens twine their long tails round the branches and bars, when they are leaping from side to side of their large cages. Its toes, too, were very long, and it clung very tightly by them. I daresay when the mouse is making her nest on the grass stalks, and the wind sways them backwards and forwards, that she has to catch hold of them very firmly. This little mouse was very fond of water, which it lapped up with its tongue like a cat. After she had had enough, she always dried her head with her paws, sitting upon her hind-legs, and doing it in a most graceful way.

Mr. Bingley put some flannel into Mousie's cage for a bed, and also some grass and beans. Mousie set to work, pulled off some of the nap of the flannel, mixed it with the grass, and then put it between the folds of the flannel, so as to make herself very snug, with a nice springy mattress to sleep on. This little mouse chased the flies that buzzed around the cage, and ate them whenever she could get hold of them or her master caught some for her, thus showing that the harvest-mouse, though it eats some corn, also destroys many insects, which do harm when too numerous. I think she was rather a greedy little mouse. As a rule, she was very shy and timid, but if any of her favourite food was shown her, such as a fly, or a



Harvest Mice.

grain of corn or maize, she would come out of her hiding-place and eat it out of her master's hand.

This tiny field-mouse is quite different to the kind that lives in our houses and picks up the crumbs at night or nibbles the candles and cheese. It lives entirely out-of-doors, though sometimes it is carried into barns with the sheaves of corn, for it abounds at harvest time in the corn-fields; and if you notice carefully as you walk through the fields at the end of July and beginning of August you may see some stalks of corn or grass closely knotted together, about ten or twelve inches from the ground, by a lump of dry grass; and if you did not know what it was, you might think it was just a ball of dry stuff that had become entangled with the growing

corn, but if you observe more closely you will find that it is a "home without hands," made by the teeth and claws of this tiny animal; and if you should be so fortunate as to see the little mouse itself, I am sure you would admire its pretty, quick, graceful movements as it pops up and down the green stalks.

L. I. E.

THE DEAD SEA.

THE Dead Sea is a great inland lake, filling the deepest valley in the world, between Palestine and Moab. It is about 45 miles long by 10 broad, and it occupies the spot where once stood the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah, destroyed by God for their wickedness in the time of Abraham. (Gen. xix.)



The Dead Sea lies so low, that from whatever direction it is approached it is necessary to go *down* to it. It is just as if a piece had been scooped out of the earth and filled with water. When it is reached, there is no parti-

cular beauty about it. Its banks are barren, and in its waters there are no fish, nor any signs of life. It is a dangerous place, moreover, to visit, from the presence of the Bedouins—Arab robbers—who can spy a stranger

from afar, just as a vulture can its prey. It was formerly believed that no bird could fly across it, from the noxious vapours it sent up. This has been of late years proved to be a mistake, but it is certain that its vapours destroy swarms of locusts. When the writer saw it, the shore was thickly strewn with dead locusts.

The waters of the Sea are salt and bitter, and very nauseous to the taste. They are so buoyant that nothing can sink. To be drowned in the Dead Sea is almost impossible. If the bather tries to swim, he is compelled to give it up and take to floating. A bathe is delightful, if the salt does not get into the eyes or mouth, as it generally does.

What makes the Dead Sea so interesting to us is its being mentioned in the Bible. It is there called the East Sea, and the Salt Sea; but its present name, the *Dead Sea*, has the most meaning in it, for its waters are literally dead and death-giving.

One of the most frequent figures in the Bible to express life is that of water, but it is always running or moving water that is so meant,—water which refreshes and gives life as it flows along. Thus Christ, in His conversation at the well with the woman of Samaria, told her that “if she had asked of Him He would have given her *living water*,” or, in other words, “eternal life.” The figure is used throughout the whole Bible, and in the last chapter but one of Ezekiel is a prophecy respecting the dead water of this very sea.

There are several reasons why its water is so dead. One is that there is no place for the waters of the Jordan, which constantly pour into it, to flow out again, and which in consequence become polluted. Another is, that there are vast beds of salt and minerals at the bottom of the lake, which destroy all life and growth.

It was a puzzle for a long time to know what became of the great quantity of water which the river Jordan for thousands of years had been giving to the lake. How was it that it did not rise and overflow? The reason probably is, because what is called ‘evaporation’ is always going on; the water is drawn up like dew, so that the lake continues to remain within its old

bounds. These salt dews are very injurious to the surrounding country, the neighbourhood for many miles, in consequence, being a desolate, stony wilderness. Very little mineral matter is drawn up, and so the water is extremely salt. It is a wise ordering of Providence that the water is so salt, or else the stagnant and putrifying water of a fresh-water lake as large as the Dead Sea would breed constant disease and pestilence everywhere around it. B.

THE FLIES AND THE SPIDERS.

From the German.

WHY has God created the flies and spiders? a young prince often said to himself, “Such insects are of no use to man, and had I the power, I would cause them to disappear from the earth.”

One day, during a war, this prince was obliged to flee before the enemy. At night, being very much fatigued, he lay down under a tree in the middle of a forest, and soon fell fast asleep. He was discovered by one of the enemy's soldiers, who glided softly up to him, sword in hand, intending to kill him. At this moment a fly suddenly alighted on the cheek of the prince and stung him so sharply that he awoke. He started up, drew his sword, and fought with the soldier, and at last escaped. Then the prince went and hid himself in a cavern of the same forest. During the night a spider spun her thread across the entrance. Two soldiers who were in search of the fugitive prince, came so near the cave, that he could hear their conversation.

“Look,” said one, “no doubt he is hidden here.”

“No,” replied the other, “he could not have entered without tearing down that spider's web.”

As soon as they had gone, the prince cried out with emotion, raising his hands to heaven—“O my God! what gratitude do I not owe Thee! Thou didst save my life yesterday by means of a fly, and to-day Thou hast preserved me by means of a spider. Truly there is a use and purpose in all the works of Thy creation.”

"BRIGHTING ALL IT CAN."

THE day had been dark and gloomy, when suddenly, towards night, the clouds broke, and the sun's rays streamed through, shedding a flood of golden light upon the whole country. A sweet voice at the window called out in joyful tones, "Look, father! look! the sun is *brighting* all it can."

"Brighting all it can! so it is," was the answer; "and you can be like the sun if you choose."

"How, father? tell me how!"

"By looking happy, and smiling on us all day, and never letting any tearful rain come into the blue of those eyes. Only be happy and good; that is all."

The next day the music of the child's voice filled our ears from sunrise to dark; the little heart seemed full of light and love; and, when asked why she was so happy, the answer came laughingly, "Why don't you see, I'm the sun? I'm brighting all I can!"

"And filling the house with sunshine and joy," answered the loving father.

Cannot little children be like the sun every day, "brighting all they can?" Try it, children.

"I TALKED TO MYSELF."

POOR little Ned, how his teeth did ache! He bore it a long time rather than go to the dentist. One day, however, that much-dreaded dentist came to his father's house to stop some teeth for his mother. He came in the morning, and Neddie's father told him that he had better make up his mind to have his rotten teeth taken out before the dentist left. So for about an hour he had to dread pain, and the more he thought of it the more he thought that he *couldn't* bear it, as many older people have thought too.

At last the dentist had done his other work. "Come, my little boy," said he to Neddie, "I'm ready to attend to you now."

Neddie's heart came into his mouth with a jump as he looked at the bright, cold, steel instruments lying ready.

"If you are afraid, the dentist may give you chloroform," said his father.

Neddie left the room, saying that he would be back in a few moments.

"*What a Coward!*" I hear you saying. Just wait a bit, if you please. Soon he returned, walked straight for the arm-chair, seated himself, laid his head back, and opened his mouth. His father came and held his head while the dentist quickly cut round the offending teeth. Then he placed his instrument on the tooth. Yerk! But no, it was a hard one, or the dentist was not very expert. Neddie grasped the arms of the chair *hard* to keep from screaming. In a moment there was another stronger instrument on the tooth, and with a twist and yerk, out it came. Neddie clasped his hands to his mouth, while the tears came to his eyes. Poor boy! He spit once or twice, then leaning back his head, shut his eyes and opened his mouth for another pull, for there was one more to come, and an ugly one too. This time at the first pull it came—twist, yerk, *creak!* Neddie thought that his whole head was coming off. No, indeed! It was only the tooth, and *it was out!* The worst was over, but the poor jaws ached terribly.

The dentist took a bottle from his case and pouring a little of the contents into a drinking glass, filled it with water and handed it to Neddie, telling him to take it into his mouth, as it would take out the soreness. For the first time since the operation Neddie spoke, "What is it?"

"Only a little rum and water."

"I'm a Teetotaler, sir, and I would rather that my mouth *should* ache than take rum into it!" said the brave boy, and he took clear, pure water.

After his mouth got easier his father asked him why he left the room just before the operation.

"Why, I went out and *talked* to myself. I said 'Now, you have got two bad teeth in your head that *must* come out *some time*. Better now than when they get worse, and save the pain besides.' Then I asked God to help me to bear the pain, and then I came in and sat right down."

Was he not a noble boy? He had good



sense, he had courage, and he went to the right place for help to bear the pain. Do | all our little readers, go to the same place for help? We hope so.

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THE CHILDREN'S PRIZE

No. IX.]

SEPTEMBER, 1867.

[One Penny.]



"O mother, don't put any buttons on, I lease."

BRASS BUTTONS.

(Continued from p. 116.)

ALL alone," thought the child, "and dying, for I can't hold on much longer." He had been longing for it all to come to an end, and the end had come now. Thank God, he had never even tried to revenge himself on Jack Armstrong, and he prayed God to forgive him all his trespasses. But oh, how strange it seemed, to be so near death, and no one caring, no one trying to save him! All around him were the familiar sights and sounds of everyday life, when, as he thought, the great day had come for him. The dull rumble of carts in the neighbouring High Street, the tall spire of the church close at hand, both spoke to him in a strange good-bye sort of way. "It is the last time," thought little Archie. Another minute passed, and dimming eyes and failing ears seemed only fresh reminders from the death standing over him. Indistinctly he heard the foundry-men belonging to the neighbouring iron-works tramping over the bridge above his head, and dreamily wondered whether they were going to, or returning from their dinner. Then he slowly debated in his own mind whether he should call out to them or not, and sleepily determined against doing so, "for I couldn't make them hear, and it's such a trouble," thought he, drowsily. Then he put his head down on his arms, and noticed the bald place the wrenched off button had left, and said to himself with a smile, "I shall never hate these buttons again." Then he couldn't think any longer, but had a dream like a vision of many men and boys, and Grudge in the midst of them. But they all seemed strangers to the glazed eyes, and Archie did wish they would leave him alone,—not come so near, and not drag him out in that way; then a fresh clammy chill came on, and Archie fainted, and thinking it was death, was so glad it

was all nearly over, but thought the messenger had been long in coming.

And so the spirit wandered away from the poor stricken little corpse, and went—who shall say whither? Perhaps very near to the God who gave it, just to get strengthened and refreshed by a glimpse of heaven. Or was it met by some pitying angel, when hovering about in the valley of the shadow of death, and, for the dear sake of Archie's mother, sent back to Archie's body? Who can tell?

And was it grieved at finding itself once more in its prison-house? For the little boy's first sensation of returning life was a very painful one. "Death was easier," he thought, as, with a half-stifled feeling, he found himself once more throbbing back into being.

He found himself at home, in the big bed with blue curtains in the stranger's room, and wondered why he wasn't in his own white, curtainless, nursery bed.

Then, with a weary effort, he turned his head and saw his mother sitting by him, inside the curtains, and crying softly. He put out his little tired hand and touched her, and instantly the dear, dear eyes ceased weeping, and the dear, dear arms were gently round him. Then—with a dim sense of warmth and peace and protection, that seemed to have been absent from him for years—he fell asleep again.

Days and weeks followed, and still Archie lay there battling for his life. Inflammation of the lungs made every breath a painful labour to him, and when that had in some degree abated, rheumatism came, and twisted and knotted his agonised joints.

At first he was almost always unconscious, and in his delirium would call out pitifully to the author of all his troubles.

"O Armstrong, let me go! O Armstrong, leave me alone!" were the constant painfully uttered exclamations.

For every word caused suffering, and the quick laboured breathing could even be heard outside his room door. Then would come a gasping prayer.

"Please, God, keep me from hating Jack Armstrong, and never let mother think I love her less. Oh, if I could only tell

mother! But I can't be a sneak," Archie would gasp, starting up in bed with scarlet cheeks and blazing eyes. Then his mother would go to him, and at the first touch of the well-known hand the poor little boy would grow quiet and contented.

It was doubted whether he would ever get well again, but he was very young, and his mother's prayers were very fervent, and God was very good.

So it came to pass that, about six weeks after that unlucky day on the river, Archie was allowed to sit up for a little while. He was put in a big arm-chair close to the fire, well propped up with cushions, and with a tall footstool for the little thin legs, which trembled so much. And he was wrapped up in a long, red-silk dressing-gown of his mother's, of which he had always had the greatest admiration; but this day he seemed quite indifferent to its glories. Maudie stood, with her finger in her mouth, looking at Archie with shy, wondering eyes.

"Why do you stare so?" asked the little boy, peevishly.

"Your bones are staring, too," said Maudie; "they come pushing out everywhere: I never knew you had such a lot before, Archie."

And truly the little thin face, with its sunken cheeks, and protruding cheek-bones, round the hollow, old-looking eyes, was bony enough to attract anybody's attention.

Archie made no answer, but lay back among his cushions, and shut the big eyes, and then said, weakly, "Stroke my legs, for they do ache so."

Ah! no one who has not been ill can tell how legs *do* ache when they are first called upon to do duty again. They object even to merely hanging down, and seem to think a level life the only one they can bear.

Maudie knelt down, and with her soft, baby hands travelled over the sharp edges of mere bones, and the poor little legs forgot their troubles for a few minutes. But the fire was very hot, and Maudie had to stop every now and then to rub the back of one scorched hand with the other, and Archie could not bear these stoppages.

"You don't stroke like mother," he said, feebly pulling his legs away.

Then he thought how cross he was getting, and kept his eyes more closely shut, because of the tears beneath their lids. He was only finding out what most of us know—that it is far more easy to be patient during illness than when one is getting over it. I suppose the fact is, we use up all our stock of endurance and patience, and even courage, whilst the sharp pain lasts, so that we have none left for that tedious, discouraging "getting well," which takes so long, and is such hard work. Everybody is so thankful to see a little patient up and about again, and no one seems to guess at the naughty "What-does-it-matter?" feeling which is so often uppermost in his heart. Many prayers, much striving, constant battles with the unseen foes, all are necessary to carry any one blamelessly through such a trial. But these *are* sufficient, as He has willed whose "strength" is at such times "made perfect."

Some such unthankful thoughts as those of which I have been speaking were in little Archie's heart as his mother came in.

"I have been getting your clothes ready, my boy," she said, "for I hope you will soon be able to wear them. Here is your blue serge suit quite finished, with the exception of sewing on the buttons. Do you know, Archie, I had to make it all over again, that terrible plunge in the river had made it shrink so much!"

She held up the little suit as she spoke, looking at it with eyes full of thankfulness; at one time she had thought Archie would never need it again. But a great sob startled her.

"O mother!" said a weak little voice from the big arm-chair in its broken, sobbing tones, "O mother, don't put any buttons on, please: I do hate them so! O mother, if you only knew!"

Then the serge suit was put down, and the red-silk dressing-gown, with the little wasted form it contained, was taken up, and in a few minutes Archie was being rocked and soothed as though he were the very last baby. But he did not mind it at all; in fact, though very unmanly, it was

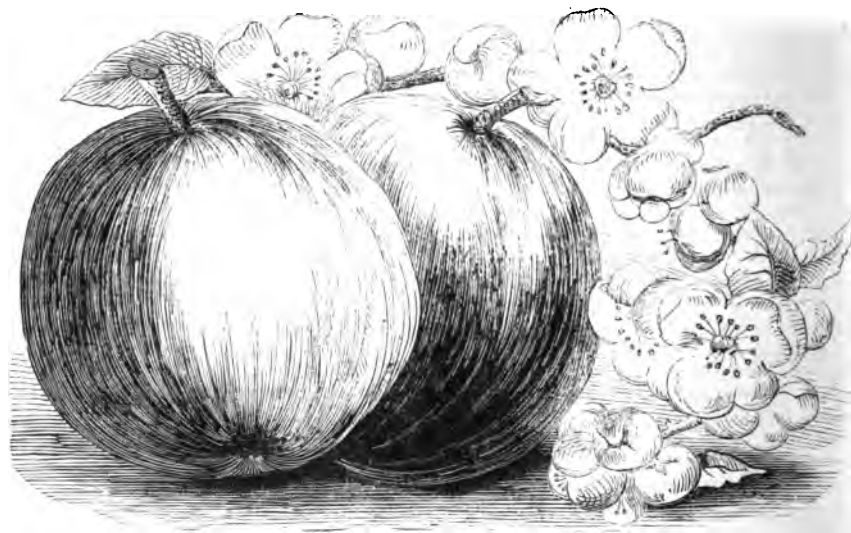
very pleasant : but the sobs still went on, and "O mother, if you only knew!" was repeated at intervals.

"You must tell me all about it when you are stronger, Archie," said Mrs. Vaughan ; "but you mustn't talk any more now."

Soon after he was put back into bed, and so that first wearisome evening was over. No other was so trying, for gradually little Archie went on "from strength to

strength" in more ways than one. He learnt in those long dark days to be more and more patient, till at last the very "appearance of evil" was "avoided" by the thin face, which always strove to look cheerful, and by the weak voice, which was taught to subdue its fretful, querulous tones.

(Concluded in our next.)



OLD JOHN'S APPLES.

OLD John had an apple-tree healthy and green,
Which bore the best codlings that ever were seen,
So juicy, so mellow, and red ;
And when they were ripe old Johnny was poor,
He sold them to children that passed by his door
To buy him a morsel of bread.

Little Dick, his next neighbour, one often might see
With longing eye viewing this nice apple-tree,
And wishing a codling might fall :
One day as he stood in the heat of the sun
He began thinking whether he might not take one,
And then he looked over the wall.

And as he again cast his eye on the tree
He said to himself, "O how nice they would be,
So cool and refreshing to-day !

The tree is so full, and I'd only take one,
And old John won't see, for he is not at home,
And nobody is in the way."

But stop, little boy, take your hand from the bough ;
Remember, though John cannot see you just now,
And no one to chide you is nigh,
There is One, who by night, just as well as by day,
Can see all you do, and can hear all you say,
From His glorious throne in the sky.

Oh, then, little boy, come away from the tree,
Content, hot, or weary, or thirsty to be,
Or anything rather than steal ;
For the great God, who even in darkness can look,
Writes down every crime we commit in His book,
However we think to conceal.



Under the Greenwood Tree.

UNDER THE GREENWOOD TREE.

COME ye into the summer woods ;
There entereth no annoy ;
All greenly wave the chestnut leaves,
And the earth is full of joy.

I cannot tell you half the sights
Of beauty you may see,
The bursts of golden sunshine
Through many a shady tree.

There, lightly swung in bowery glades,
The honeysuckles twine ;
There blooms the rose-red campion,
And the dark-blue columbine.

There grows the four-leaved plant, "true-
love,"
In some dusk woodland spot ;
There grows the enchanter's nightshade,
And the wood forget-me-not.

And many a merry bird is there,
Unscared by lawless man ;
The blue-winged jay, the woodpecker,
And the golden-crested wren.

And far within the summer wood,
Among the leaves so green,
There flows a little gurgling brook —
The brightest e'er was seen.

There come the little gentle birds,
Without a fear of ill,
Down to the murmuring water's edge,
And freely drink their fill !

And dash about, and splash about
The merry little things ;
And look askance with bright black eyes,
And flirt their dripping wings.

* * * * *

And many a wood-mouse dwelleth there,
Beneath the old wood-shade,
And all day long has work to do,
Nor is of aught afraid ;

And green shoots grow above their heads,
And roots so fresh and fine
Beneath their feet: nor is there strife
Mongst them for mine and thine.

There is enough for every one,
And they lovingly agree ;
We might learn a lesson, all of us,
Beneath the greenwood tree.

MARY HOWITT.

SCENES IN THE LIFE OF ST. PETER.

ST. PETER RAISING DORCAS TO LIFE.

Acts, ix. 36-42.



IN the eastern shore of the Mediterranean Sea there is a small town, now called *Jaffa*. The entrance to the harbour is through such a narrow, rocky passage, with such dangerous waves, that often the passengers from the steamships cannot be landed, but have to be carried on to Beyrout or Alexandria, according to the voyage that is being made. The houses of the town are lofty and massive, and the streets narrow and gloomy.

This ancient town, in Scripture times, was called *Joppa*. It was to this very place that the timber for Solomon's temple was brought by sea from Tyre, and then carried to Jerusalem, which is about forty miles distant. (2 Chron. ii. 16.)

It was to *Joppa* that *Jonah* fled from the presence of the Lord, that he might not take His message to Nineveh ; and at *Joppa* he found the ship in which he set sail for Tarshish. (*Jonah*, i. 3.)

It was at *Joppa* that St. Peter did the miracle which forms this scene in his life.

At *Joppa* there lived a certain disciple, a woman who was sometimes called *Tabitha*, and sometimes *Dorcas*, both words meaning a gazelle—a graceful little animal that is still common in that district. Perhaps she may have been called so because she was fair to look upon, but at any rate her character was a beautiful one, for she was full of good works and *alms-deeds* that she did. The law of kindness was graven upon her heart, and works of charity filled up her pious life. But it came to pass that she fell sick and died. The skill of doctors, the tender care of friends, alike were vain. The saintly spirit passed away, and the weeping widows to whom she had been so kind could only do the last sad offices

for her lifeless body, to prepare it for the grave. They washed it and laid her in an upper chamber.

While Dorcas lay a-dying, St. Peter was at Lydda, a town about six miles off; and the friends of Dorcas, who, like herself, were disciples, sent two men to Lydda to St. Peter, desiring him that he would not delay to come to them.

Perhaps they had heard how St. Peter at Lydda had cured by a word a man named Eneas, which had kept his bed eight years, and was sick of the palsy, and they may have hoped that he would restore Dorcas to health also.

As soon as the messengers reached him, St. Peter arose and went with them. But before he came Dorcas was dead. Then sadly they brought him into the upper chamber, and all the widows stood by him, weeping and showing the coats and garments which Dorcas made while she was with them.

But Peter put them all forth. He wished to pray, and perhaps the crowd in the room, their violent grief, and loud lamentations, hindered him. When he was alone, he kneeled down and prayed, and, turning to the body, he said, *Tabitha, arise!*

The word of the Apostle was with power. God suffered the spirit of Dorcas to return—the eyes that had been closed in death opened—and when she saw Peter, she, who had been made ready for burial, sat up. St. Peter gave her his hand and lifted her up, and when he had called the saints and widows, he presented her alive.

Great must have been the surprise and joy of the friends of Dorcas when they had her restored to them alive. Dorcas herself could hardly feel joy,—rather she must have grieved to leave the Paradise to which her separate soul had gone—to return to earth, in due time again to die—but doubtless she would submit cheerfully to the will of God concerning her, and would devote the rest of her days to still more zealous service for her Saviour and her Lord.

There is one lesson which some little readers may learn from the pattern of Dorcas. She not only gave alms, but she worked for the poor in making garments for

them, and even those who have little money may, by care, thought, and ingenuity, help some who are in need. They may enjoy the present pleasure of doing good, and hereafter may have the reward promised in the words: "Blessed is he that considereth the poor; the Lord will deliver him in the time of trouble." (Ps. xli. 1.)

LAME ARTHUR.

LITTLE Arthur could not run to school, nor play like other boys; he could only move slowly and a very little way on crutches. He had to sit many hours in the house, or, in summer, he liked better to sit in a sheltered nook near the porch, where his father had made a comfortable rustic bench for him. Arthur had plenty of books, and pictures, and toys; but there is not one of our little readers who would not rather have the free use of their limbs than all the toys in London, or all the wealth of India.

It was a warm day in harvest-time, when most little boys in the country were playing amongst the sheaves, or gathering blackberries in the hedges, that Arthur's brother Bob and his cousin Gilbert were going out to paddle in the brook. Arthur looked sadly at his poor crippled feet, and wished he could go too.

"Bob," he said, "please stay at home, and play where I can see."

"No, I shan't," said Bob, impatiently; "you've got my puzzle-map, and you should be contented. I can't stay about such a jolly day just for your fancies. Come along, Gilbert!"

But Gilbert could not go when he saw Arthur's pleading eyes and face saddened by Bob's rude answer.

"Let's stay with Arthur, Bob; let's pitch a wicket in the paddock, and have a bit of cricket."

"It's too hot for cricket," said Bob; "and I want to go to the brook; and I'm going."

And he vaulted over the rail, as if on purpose to show poor Arthur how active he was, and to remind him of his own crippled limbs, and ran down to the brook,



"He said, Tabitha, arise!"



Lane Arthur.

while Gilbert sat down to stay and play with his lame cousin.

Whose example would you rather follow,—Bob's or Gilbert's? Bob would have been much astonished if any one had told him that he was selfish. He always lent his books or shared his sweet-stuff with Arthur, but that required little self-denial; but when he was asked to give up his own wishes, then his selfishness showed itself. Even Jesus "pleased not Himself," and what good child does not wish to be like Him?

LOVE ONE ANOTHER.

A LITTLE girl, with a happy look,
Sat slowly reading a ponderous book,
All bound with velvet and edged with gold,
And its weight was more than the child could hold:

Yet dearly she loved to ponder it o'er,
And every day she prized it more;
For it said as she look'd at her dear little brother,

It said, "Little children, love one another."

She thought it was beautiful in that book,
And the lesson home to her heart she took;
She walk'd on her way with a trusting grace,
And a dove-like look on her meek young face,

Which said, as plain as words could say,
The Holy Bible I must obey:
So I'll try to be kind to my darling brother,
For "Little children must love one another."

I'm sorry he's naughty, and will not pray;
But I'll love him still, for I think the way
To make him gentle and kind to me,
Will be better shown if I let him see
I strive to do what is just and right;
And thus, when I kneel to pray at night,
I'll clasp my arms around my brother,
And say, "Little children must love one another."

The little girl did as the Bible taught,
And pleasant indeed was the change it wrought:
For the boy look'd up with glad surprise
To meet the light of her loving eyes;
His heart was full—he could not speak;
He press'd a kiss on his sister's cheek;
And God looked down on the happy mother,
Whose little children loved each other.

A SCHOOL FOR BULLFINCHES.

SOME bullfinches can be trained to sing two or three different airs, never at all mixing up one with the other; but much skill and patience are required to educate them. As much as four or five pounds is sometimes given for a well-trained bullfinch. At Hesse and Fulda, in Germany, there are little schools for the purpose of teaching the birds, and these supply Germany, Holland, and England with the feathered musicians. "No school," says Bishop Stanley, "can be more diligently attended by its master, and no scholars better trained to their own calling, than in a seminary of bullfinches. As a general rule they are formed into classes of about six each, and kept in a dark room, when food and music are given them at the same time; so that, when the meal is ended, if the birds feel disposed to tune up, they are naturally inclined to copy the sounds which are so familiar to them. As soon as they begin to imitate a few notes the light is let into the room, which still further cheers their spirits, and inclines them to sing." In some of these schools the birds are not allowed either light or food till they begin to sing. After being thus taught in "classes," each bullfinch is made the charge of a boy, who plays his organ from morning till night, while the superintendent of the bird-school goes his rounds regularly to watch the progress of teacher and pupils. It seems singular to those not used to birds to find that the bullfinches fully understand the scoldings or praises which they receive from this class-master. This training goes on for nine months, by which time the bird has become so accustomed to the airs as to sing them without mistake. Sometimes during the moulting season, however, the poor little songster's memory fails, and all the trouble bestowed on its education becomes perfectly useless. Some birds are taught by these methods to whistle three distinct airs; but there are few that can do more than execute a simple air, with, perhaps, a few notes from its natural song as a prelude.

ANNIE.

WHAT a pleasant sight for William Brown when he returns from his work, tired and exhausted with the day's labour, to see his little Annie, who, having arranged the tea-board, is sitting on their cottage door-step, putting the finishing-stitches to her work, and glancing up the road between each stitch, to see if dear father is in sight. And now, as each one sees the other, how sweet for them to feel that their real work for that day is over, and only some pleasant talk, a few more stitches, and a great many hours of sleep (for Annie at least) is their portion. The only drawback to their pleasure is that mother is gone away; gone to visit her, sick sailor-son at Portsmouth, and to bring him home when he is well enough. She had never been so far away from home before, and she left a great many directions with Annie as to how she was to make her father comfortable; and Annie, although she felt a big lump swelling in her throat at the united sorrow of mother's going away and brother Bob's being ill, yet listened as well as she could, and, as far as we can see, I think that she has done her duty.

So run in, little Annie, and pour the boiling water into the tea-pot, and take the pie out of the oven that you have been keeping hot till father drew near, and pop away your work, and get your usual reward, a kiss, and "Well, Annie, one would not think mother was a hundred miles away, to see the old place so neat and tidy; won't she be glad when she and Bob come back, to hear what a clever little woman you have been!"

JAPANESE DWELLINGS.

JAPAN is a large country to the north-east of Asia, beyond China. It consists of several islands, the chief one of which the people call Nippon—"rising sun." Hence the Japanese call their country, the land of the rising sun.

The people, though of the same origin as the Chinese, have differed from them in many ways. The Japanese may be said to be a more practical people, and more

willing to learn good from foreigners than the Chinese are. There are some Japanese of distinction at the present time in Paris, who pray for permission to study there under the Emperor's protection. No Chinese ever did the like.

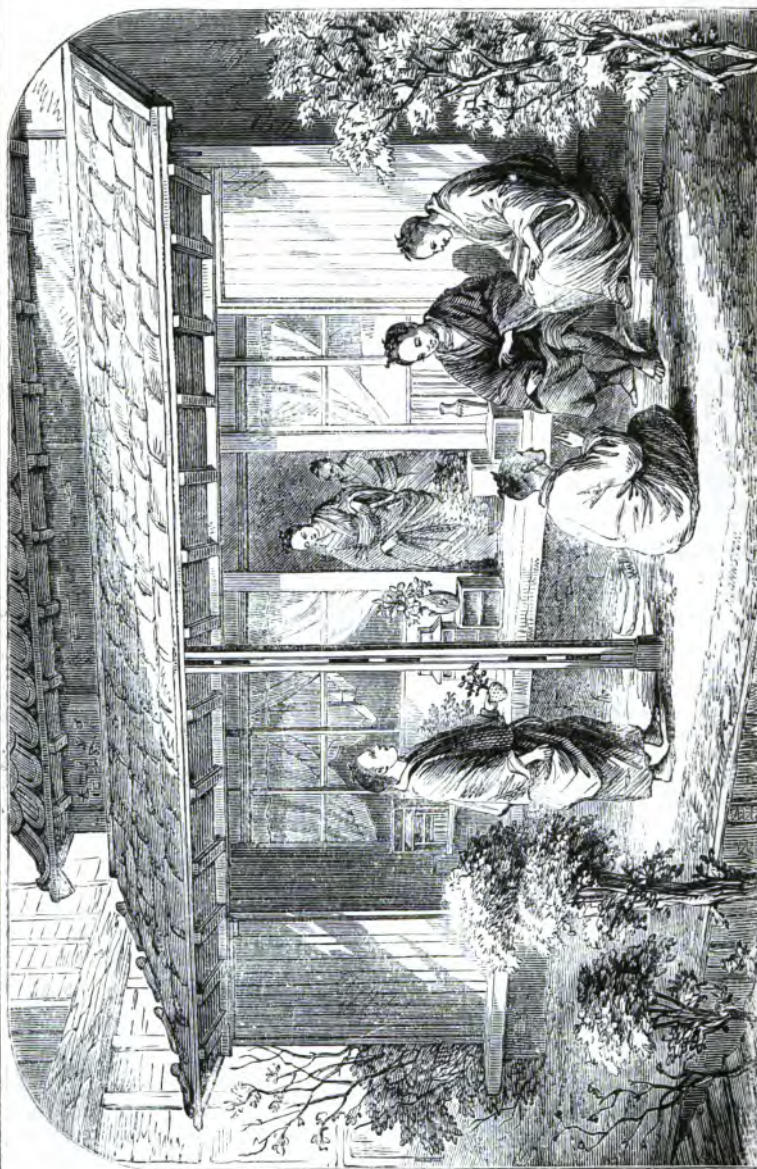
Japan was quite shut up from the rest of the world until within the last few years, and though much has been written about it lately, very little is really known. It is certain, however, that the people are in a sadly benighted state, although in many ways they are clever; as for instance, in weaving, building, and other arts. The silk they produce is often superb, and the china of Japan is beautiful and costly.

The houses in which the people live are of course of various kinds. Our picture gives us an excellent notion of a dwelling of the better class. There is something about it that has a very pleasant look. The people, too, are prepossessing in appearance.

A Japanese dwelling consists of a house within a house, or rather of a house in the centre of a court, round which are other buildings. The inner house is raised above the ground, and divided into rooms by means of sliding panels. The floor is spread with soft white mats, woven of cloth. Upon these mats the inmates sit down to eat and drink, and lie down at night to sleep. The law of Japan prescribes that all these mats shall be of one uniform size throughout the land. The windows are filled with paper, upon which are paintings of birds and landscapes. The walls of the house are covered with hangings of paper, which may be rolled up as we roll up maps. Chairs they do not use, and tables are uncommon. In winter, when it is cold, the house is warmed by charcoal, which is burnt in braziers. The houses of the wealthy are surrounded by beautiful gardens and pleasure-grounds.

In the poorer dwellings there is only one room. In the centre of it is a square hole in which charcoal is burnt. Over it is a kettle, to boil tea—a drink of which all classes among them are very fond.

When the king, or tycoon, of Japan dies, several of his nobles are compelled to commit suicide, to die with him. Their religion gives them no hope beyond the grave. All

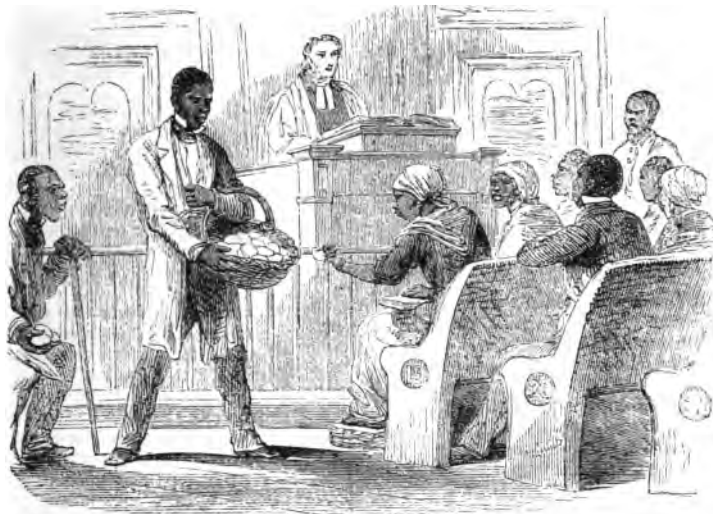


A Japanese House.

is unbroken night. One of their own proverbs runs, "As the floating grass is blown by the breeze, or as the clouds of autumn disappear, or as the ship returns home to her old shore, so is life. It is a smoke—a morning tide!"

May some of them soon know, by the teachings of Christianity, that life is something more earnest than this, and that there is a shore beyond!

B.



WEST-INDIAN OFFERINGS.

THE Negro congregations in the West Indies are very poor, but when a collection is made they frequently give well; that is, they give in proportion to their means, which cannot be said of most English congregations.

At a particular church in that part of the world, it is the custom to go round with a basket instead of a plate, as it is known the people have no money. What do they give them? Eggs.

The poor people all keep poultry, which is done without expense, and they have always a good store of eggs by them. As they cannot give what they have not, they take their eggs to church, and put them into the basket, as their offering to God. These eggs are sent to the market to be sold, and they frequently realize as much as three or four pounds.

A few years ago the members of a certain congregation in the West Indies, all black, but some of them better off than others, met together to decide on the best means of raising a good collection the following Sunday. They adopted three resolutions.

1. That all should give *something*.
2. That all should give *according to their means*.
3. That all should give *willingly*.

When the Sunday came, the congregation as they passed out of church laid their several contributions upon a table, the secretary sitting by to take account. The pence and silver made a goodly pile.

One of the leading men, the richest present, and a vain man—his shoes creaking loudly as he came—approached the table, and put down a shilling.

"Take it back! take it back!" said the secretary. "Dat not according to the second resolution. You able well to give five shillings."

This happening before the whole people, made the giver get out of temper, and he cast down four more shillings, crying, "Take five shillings, then, if you want them."

"Bery sorry. Can't take dem now. Dat not according to the third resolution."

The man was now quite enraged, and taking up all his money, declared he would give nothing at all.

"You must. Dat not according to the first resolution."

So he had to go back to his seat, his shoes creaking louder than ever, and wait there until his temper had cooled down, when he once more approached the table, and meekly put down his five shillings, which were now accepted. W.

THE WAY TO PARADISE.

From the German of J. N. Vogl.

WHY comes the child a-weeping?
Why seeks she still in vain
The hospital to enter,
And knocks and knocks again?

"Oh, let me in, I pray you!
I seek my mother dear;
Two months ago they took her,
And carried her in here."

"Poor little orphan maiden!
My heart aches sore for thee;
For now, alas! thy mother
Thou nevermore wilt see:

"For seven days already
She in the ground hath lain."
So spake the aged porter,
And shut the door again.

But still before the gateway
The weeping orphan stayed;
She could not tell the meaning
Of what the old man said.

Then back to a kind neighbour
She crept (with downcast look) —
One who had given her shelter
Since God her mother took.

And still upon the morrow
She stood before the door,
And knocked again unceasing,
Till her little hands were sore.

"Oh, porter! cruel porter!
Oh, open to my prayer!
At home it is so lonely
When mother is not there."

"Poor little child! thy mother
Can never hear thy cries,
For know that she is dwelling
E'en now in Paradise."

Once more the door he shutteth;
This time she turns away,
And wonders who will show her
To Paradise the way.

With little feet all naked,
And frock all thin and torn,
She climbs the stony pathway,—
That little child forlorn;

And asketh each one meekly
Who meets her on the way,
"To Paradise, oh, show me
The nearest road, I pray!"

"Oh, rough that way and weary,
Sweet maiden," each replies;
"God in His mercy guide thee
Himself to Paradise!"

But no one clearly tells her
Where lies the wished-for place;
So onward still she goeth,
With never-tiring pace.

And now the shadows lengthen,
Now gone the sun's last rays,
The child kneels down, and folding
Her little hands she prays.

Then 'neath the sheaves all golden
She nestles for the night,
Until again the meadows
Are bathed in soft sunlight;

Then on again she goeth,
With grave inquiring eyes,
Asking of all to show her
The way to Paradise.

Full many a heart in pity
For the poor orphan bled,
And many a tender mother
Would give her fruit and bread.

Thus goes she ever onward,
Wandering the country o'er;
The little feet so tender
Are cut, and tired, and sore.

Her curly locks are tangled,
Her cheeks are thin and white,
The little frock is tattered,
And wet with dews of night.

And so the time goes slowly;
The days have weeks become
Since first the little wanderer
Began to stray from home.

And weaker still and weaker
 She grows at every stage,
 Her limbs now scarce can bear her
 Upon her pilgrimage.

But see afar a cloister!
 The dome and turrets old
 Gleam in the morning sunbeams,
 As if of burnished gold.

The little one creeps thither
 Counsel and aid to seek,
 And trembling at the gateway
 Knocks,—cold, and faint, and weak.

Quickly the door was opened;
 A sister, sweet and mild,
 "What is it here thou seekest,
 Thou little lonely child?"

"My mother, who has left me,
 I seek, and though they say
 In Paradise she's dwelling,
 They tell me not the way."

"Poor, poor forsaken orphan!"
 The lady sadly sighs;
 The child looks up inquiring,
 With wondering, wistful eyes.

But see, what shudderings seize her!
 What sudden anguish wild!
 She sinks,—she falls,—already
 She is an angel-child!

The sisters press around her
 With many an anxious care,
 And many a healing cordial
 They hasten to prepare.

In vain their fond endeavours,
 Silent and cold she lies,—
 What matter? she hath found it,—
 The way to Paradise!

M. C. H.

THE STORY OF A HORSE-SHOE.

A GOOD countryman was taking a rural walk with his son Thomas. As they walked slowly along, the father suddenly stopped.

"Look," he said, "there's a bit of iron—a piece of a horse-shoe; pick it up, and put it in your pocket."

"It is not worth stooping for," answered the child.

The father, without uttering another

word, picked up the iron, and put it in his pocket. When they came to a village, he entered the blacksmith's shop and sold it for three farthings, with which sum he bought some cherries. Then the father and son set off again on their ramble. The sun was burning hot, and neither a house, tree, or fountain of water, was in sight. Thomas soon complained of being tired, and had some difficulty in following his father, who walked on with a firm step. Perceiving that his boy was tired, the father let fall a cherry as if by accident. Thomas stooped, and quickly picked it up, and ate it. A little further, the father dropped another, and the boy picked it up as eagerly as before; and thus they continued, the father dropping the fruit, and the son picking them up. When the last one was eaten, the father stopped, and turning to the boy, said: "Look, my son! If you had chosen to stoop once and pick up a piece of horse-shoe, you would not have been obliged at last to stoop so often to pick up the cherries."

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Thomas picking up the Cherries.

Page 143.

The Volume of the "PRIZE" for 1867 will be Ready on the 1st of December.

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THE CHILDREN'S PRIZE

No. X.]

OCTOBER, 1867.

[One Penny.]



.. "What is the matter with Jack to-day?"—Sketches by F. W. KAYL .



THE GIRL AND DOG.

WHAT is the matter with Jack to-day? He sits at the door in a thoughtful sulky kind of way, and the little girl he generally is so fond of, and whom he goes to see every day, has come to the door wrapped in her father's great-coat, for she has been ill, and has only just recovered. She is patting his head, but, instead of answering as usual with a wag of his tail, he seems to be perfectly indifferent, and looks another way instead of into her smiling face.

"What is the matter with Jack to-day?" says the little girl, but Jack cannot talk, although he knows what is the matter. The fact is, Jack belongs to a butcher; he is not of any particular breed, but what his master calls an "any-how" sort of dog. He is very intelligent and clever, and his work is to take care of the shop in the daytime, and to sleep in the stable at night, where the horses and the harness are kept. When the family are all busy in the house, Jack is tied up in the shop, and when a customer comes, he utters a mild sort of bark, which soon brings his mistress to her post; but if a suspicious-looking person comes, somebody who looks as if he would not go away without some meat, but would forget to pay for it, he barks angrily and loudly, and pulls at his string in a frantic sort of manner, as if he meant to say, "Look sharp and come quickly, there is a leg of mutton in danger." He generally is a quiet, stay-at-home sort of dog; but, sometimes, he takes it into his head that the stable, and the shop, and the visits to the little girl, have a great sameness about them; he gets tired of doing well, and thinks he ought to have a little excitement, and ought to see what the world is made of, and how the other dogs get on, and whether something cannot be done to improve their general condition. He then

gets a few other dogs to neglect their business also, and away they tear, up street and down street, very often fall in with bad company, houseless and homeless dogs who would rather starve than suffer any restraint. For a little while, they think they are so happy; but by-and-bye they get to fighting; then boys throw stones at them or threaten to fasten tin kettles to their tails, and the carters crack their whips at them, and they feel that there is no safety except at home. The dinner-hour brings nothing but the chance of a dirty bone in a gutter, which often has to be fought for; and when it is obtained there is not a peaceful place to eat it in, but it must be snapped up in anxious haste. But in spite of all this, Jack likes the 'lark' as they call it, and last night he was not home at eleven o'clock, and I am sorry to say I overheard the butcher's man say, after whistling and calling for him a long time, "If I only catch him, I'll kick a couple of his ribs in; he knows as well as possible when it's bed-time, and won't he catch it when he comes, that's all!"

I told the man that it was wrong to kick anybody's ribs in, and that he ought to whip Jack but not kick him. The next day, I saw Jack sitting at the door as in the picture, and I thought to myself, "I know what's the matter with Jack: he has been well punished, his bones ache from the blows and his rambles, and he thinks he will never be such a foolish dog again."

BRASS BUTTONS.

(Concluded from page 132.)

WHEN he got stronger, and better able to tell a long story, his mother heard all about his trials and troubles, and she was of opinion that it would have been by no means "sneaking" had she been told of them long before.

"I would have kept your secret, Archie," she said; "and the very fact of your telling me would have lightened your heart: besides, I think you always get on better after one of our talks."

"Oh, yes, mother," and Archie rubbed

himself against her in the old way, and looked into the soft eyes that were full of tears after hearing his troubles. They were all over now, past "as a dream when one awaketh." But it had been a very bad dream.

"And your old tormentor is gone, Archie!"

"Not because of me?" said Archie with a start.

"Not entirely," said Mrs. Vaughan; "but of course Mr. Cooper questioned all the boys very closely as to your accident, and he has suspected for a long time that Armstrong had been bullying you; so it has ended in his writing to Mr. Armstrong, declining any longer to take charge of a boy who has given so much trouble, and who gets worse rather than better."

"Oh, I am sorry!" said Archie.

"It is the very best thing for him, my dear little boy, for I hear his father means to send him to a very strict boarding-school; that is the only treatment for a coward and a bully; I am afraid Mr. Cooper is far too mild and gentle for such. And I cannot help feeling rejoiced that you will, next half, have a much better chance of getting on. But, Archie, there is another vacant place in your school: you won't find Harry Cooper there when you return."

"They've never sent him away, mother, have they? I thought his father could not bear Harry to be away from him."

"Yes, Archie, he can bear it now, for his Father in heaven wanted him too."

So it was; Archie's help and hindrance had each been removed: one had been expelled in disgrace; the other, the child of so much love, both earthly and heavenly, had been given the "better part."

"Don't cry, my boy," said Mrs. Vaughan; "you know too, Archie, it is only being 'lifted higher.'"

These changes, and little Archie's illness, made life seem a very troublous journey just then. All at once he had been lifted out of a happy, thoughtless child, into a weary little pilgrim on a dusty road. Which was the better? I think my readers will say the latter, for the way in which Archie bore his troubles showed

whence he derived his strength. In one case he had needed little; in the other, needing all things, he had found the Creator and Preserver of all ready to help, "able to save." And the presence of God grew so dear to him, that never, never through all his after life could he for long do without the "comfort" of it. Had he not learnt with peculiar emphasis the meaning of the words, "I have led thee by my hand, thou art mine?" So the trials through which this little boy passed were to him as Jacob's ladder, connecting earth and heaven.

When summer came, Archie grew strong and well again, but—will my readers think him very "babyish?"—to this day he cannot endure Brass Buttons. Maudie, on the contrary, is very fond of them, always thinking they helped greatly to get Archie out of the river on that memorable day.

My story is finished, and I cannot help feeling glad that I have done with Jack Armstrong; a bully is not a pleasant subject to write about. Is not the whole system of bullying utterly contrary to the "meekness and gentleness" of Him who sanctified every year of a boy's life by passing through all and each of them? Will you not learn of Him, boys, and so be "gentle unto all?"

UTER.

A GOLDEN ENVELOPE.

A POOR servant girl, who had attended a ragged school in London and had received much benefit for soul as well as body, one evening, at the close of the school, put into the Rector's hand—much to his surprise—a note containing a half-sovereign. Her wages were only eight pounds a-year. She offered this as a thanksgiving to God for the blessings she had received from the schools, very modestly and beautifully saying that it was not much, "But, sir, *I have wrapped it up in an earnest prayer, and many tears.*" Here is, indeed, a most rare and beautiful envelope! Would that our offerings, as we lay them upon God's altar, were always wrapped in the golden envelope of "*an earnest prayer and many tears!*"



LITTLE ACTS OF KINDNESS.

DO something for each other,
 Though small the help may be;
 There's comfort oft in little things,
 Far more than others see.
 It takes the sorrow from the eye,
 It leaves the world less bare,
 If but a friendly hand comes nigh
 When friendly hands are rare.
 Then cheer the heart which toils each hour,
 Yet finds it hard to live;
 And though but little's in our power,
 That little let us give.

We know not what the humblest hand,
 If earnest, may achieve,—
 How many a sad anxiety
 A trifle may relieve:
 We reck not how the ragged poor
 Drag on from day to day,
 When e'en the little that they need
 Costs more than they can pay.
 Then cheer the heart that toils each hour,
 Yet finds it hard to live;
 And though but little's in our power,
 That little let us give.



THE LOST CHILD.

JANEY was a little girl who lived in a big town. She was about four years old, and had just begun to go to the infant school, which was three streets off. Her brother, who went to the boy's school, took care of her, and saw her safely there and

safely home. But one afternoon Janey's mother wished her to stay at home, so Tommy went off without her. The little girl was playing with her doll in the corner when he went away, while her mother was busy at her washing in the back kitchen.

But after a while Janey took it into her little head to toddle out into the street, and her mother did not notice that she was gone. By-and-bye she came to give the little girl her tea, but she was nowhere to be seen. The mother thought she must be with their neighbours' children, and she went to look for her there, but they had seen nothing of Janey. Then the mother got into a fright, and ran to the school to see if her child had gone there, but the teachers had not seen her.

All kinds of fears then came into the poor mother's heart. She thought that some one had stolen her little girl, or that she had wandered to the river-side and fallen in. Tommy and other scholars ran up and down the streets, looking in all the courts to see if they could find her; but all was in vain. When the evening began to close in, and there was no news of Janey, the mother went to the police-office to see if any kind person had taken the lost one there, but the police had not seen or heard anything of her; and they advised the distracted woman to send round the town-crier to give notice that a little girl had been lost.

The crier set out with his bell, and with Tommy and other boys at his heels, and, at the corners of the crowded streets, he gave notice that a little girl had strayed or been stolen from her home.

He had nearly finished his round, when, just after he had shouted out his notice at one corner, and was going on to the last place, Tommy spied his little sister, with no bonnet on, with her doll still in her hand, and crying bitterly.

She had set out from home thinking to follow him to school, and had taken a wrong turning, and had wandered about till she had got a long way from home, and was quite tired and sleepy, and was just thinking of sitting down to cry when Tommy found her, and carried her home on his back.

The mother was relieved of her terrible fears, and took care not to lose sight of her little girl unless she knew she was in safe-keeping, and Janey learnt a lesson not to wander away from home unless she had hold of Tommy's or her mother's hand.

SCENES IN THE LIFE OF ST. PETER.

THE VISIONS OF ST. PETER AND CORNELIUS.

Acts, x. 1-25.



UR last scene in the life of St. Peter took place in Joppa, where he raised Dorcas to life. We have now to put before ourselves another scene in the same city.

One day, St. Peter went up upon the housetop to pray, for Eastern houses are all flat-roofed, and the people use the roof as a place for quiet retirement—for resting, or even sleeping.

St. Peter became very hungry, and would have eaten, but while they made ready he fell into a trance,—that is, a kind of vision or dream,—and he thought he saw heaven opened, and what looked like a great sheet, knit at the four corners, let down to the earth, and in this sheet there were all manner of four-footed beasts of the earth, and wild beasts, and creeping things, and fowls of the air,—there were both such animals as were allowed for food by Jewish law, and such as were forbidden,—both such as were counted clean and such as were unclean. These laws about the clean and unclean were meant to keep Jews distinct from other nations. and though Jesus had so plainly said, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature," yet the Apostles had not yet learnt that the difference between Jews and Gentiles was now at an end—many of them still kept the strict laws of Moses, which separated them from the Gentiles. So it was, that though he was very hungry, St. Peter, in his vision, answered to the voice which said, *Rise, Peter, kill and eat*, with these words, *Not so, Lord; for I have never eaten anything that is common or unclean*. To remove his scruples—to show him that the law of Moses was now at an end, the voice said, *What God hath cleansed that call not thou common*. But this was so contrary to all St. Peter's feelings and

notions, that he doubted in himself what this which he had seen should mean.

But it was soon explained to him; for while he thought on the vision, the Spirit-voice said to him, *Behold, three men seek thee; Arise, therefore, and get thee down, and go with them, doubting nothing, for I have sent them.*

Then St. Peter went down, and found that the men were messengers from Cornelius, a Gentile captain who lived at Cæsarea, and who begged the Apostle to come to him, as he wished to hear words of him.

The next day St. Peter set out with the messengers, and when they came to Cæsarea, Cornelius was waiting for them, and he fell down at the Apostle's feet and worshipped him. *But Peter took him up, saying, I myself also am a man.* Then they went to the centurion's house, and found many that were come together.

Then St. Peter showed that he had learnt the lesson which the vision on the housetop was meant to teach him, for he said to these Gentiles, *Ye know how that it is an unlawful thing for a man that is a Jew to keep company, or to come unto one of another nation, but God hath showed me that I should not call any man common or unclean.*

Then Cornelius told his vision, which had led him to send for the Apostle. He told them all, that while he was praying in his house a man stood before him in bright clothing, and said that his prayers were heard, and that his alms were had in remembrance in the sight of God, and that he was to send to Joppa for Simon Peter, who would come and speak unto him.

It was in obedience to this holy angel that Cornelius had sent to St. Peter, and now the Apostle, being thus assured of God's will by the double vision, opened his mouth and preached unto them about Jesus; and while Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word. Then the Jews were astonished, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost.

All this has a lesson for us. We are Gentiles, and we may rejoice that now God's truth is not known only to the Jews. The door of the gospel-mansions is open

to us, and we may enter in and be saved. God is no respecter of persons, and if we draw nigh to Him, trusting in Jesus, He will give us the treasures of His love and mercy as freely as He did to His chosen ones of old. Yes, and just as He punished His own people when they fell into idolatry, and did not live according to the special benefits they had, so He will surely be very sore displeased with us, and will punish us if we do not walk worthy of the grace of God, which, in God's Holy Word and Sacraments, is so abundantly offered unto us.

HANNAH'S MITTENS.

ALL day long the old grandmother sat in her high-backed chair by the sunny south window, where the honeysuckle and sweetbrier peeped in, and where pussy liked to watch the flies humming above her head as she lay in the warm light.

Fast flew the shining needles, and pussy eyed the bright red ball of yarn, waiting for it to drop; and the grandmother looked pleased as her work got on, for she was knitting a pair of mittens for little Hannah.

Only yester-even the child had cried with pain over her little red hands when she came from school, and to-day the good granny had got this scarlet yarn, and soon the mittens would be ready for the aching fingers.

The needles flew faster than ever as the clock in the corner struck four, and the second mitten hopped about in the grandmother's fingers, while the first lay on her knee beside the red ball.

School was over at four o'clock, and soon Hannah bounced into the room, and was watching granny's glittering needles as they wrought that mystery of all mittens—the creation of a thumb! She was eager to put them on, but she was not allowed to do so till the last stitch was taken and the ends of the bright yarn cut off.

So she stood demurely waiting for the happy moment to arrive when she might hide her restless fingers in the soft scarlet, and while she waited the good granny said to her,—

"Hannah, I've been thinking about these



"He fell into a trance."



Hannah giving the Flowers to her old Grandfather.

mittens to-day, and I think they may do you much good if you will let them."

"To be sure, grandmother, I will let them keep my hands as warm as ever they can."

"But I want them to do something more than that," said the grandmother; "let me see if you cannot tell us every night of some good that these mittens have done beside keeping your fingers warm."

Hannah laughed at the plan, but she settled to let the little red mittens have something every day to tell the kind grandmother who had made them.

Next morning, on her way to school, she overtook Rosa Harris, dragging her lame brother to school in a little carriage. Hannah saw that Rosa was tired, so she let the little red mitten grasp the rope, and merrily it worked to drag the lame boy's carriage up the hill to the school. When the children came out of school the snow had fallen and covered all the path, with drifts so deep in some places that the little ones would get wet in going through them; then Hannah remembered her mittens, and the broom behind the school-door, and soon she had swept a clear passage to the high-road.

When she got home, she told granny what her mittens had done. Granny smiled her approval, and told Hannah to let the little red fairies do all they could every day.

And it was wonderful to hear all that those merry-looking little mittens did in the course of the long winter. They helped to draw the lame boy to school and back many times; they carried many a basket and bundle for the old grandmother and other neighbours; they led three poor little ragged children to the Sunday-school; they put many a penny into the alms-dish in church, or into the missionary-box. Not a day passed but Hannah found something that her mittens could do, and they never failed to obey her bidding.

Before spring came, and the mittens, rather the worse for wear, were put into the drawer for next winter's use, Hannah's hands had learnt the good grandmother's lesson, and she found many a little deed of love and kindness to do; and often her

neighbours would give her a bunch of flowers to take home to her old grandfather, who had been a gardener himself, though now he was too old and feeble to get much about. But even when she brought a bright nosegay which her teacher had given her, the old grandfather, and grandmother too, thought that the sweetest flower of the whole posy was little, useful Hannah herself.

The good grandmother's lesson stayed in Hannah's heart long after the mittens were far too tight for her. Yes, even when granny's knitting-needles were rusty in their case, and the sunlight fell across her vacant chair, her big Bible, which was now Hannah's, still fell open at the words, "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might."

THE DYING CHILD.

By Fulcher.

"COME closer; closer, dear mamma,
My heart is filled with fears,
My eyes are dark,—I hear your sobs,
But cannot see your tears.

I feel your warm breath on my lips,
That are so icy cold;
Come, closer, closer, dear mamma—
Give me your hand to hold."

I quite forget my little hymn,
'How doth the busy bee,'
Which every day I used to say;
When sitting on your knee."

Nor can I recollect my prayers;
And, dear mamma, you know
That the great God will angry be
If I forget them, too.

And dear papa, when he comes home,
Oh, will he not be vexed?
'Give us this day our daily bread:'
What is it that comes next?"

"Hush, darling! you are going to
The bright and blessed sky,
Where all God's holy children go,
To live with Him on high."

"But will He love me, dear mamma,
As tenderly as you?
And will my own papa, one day,
Come, and live with me, too?"

But you must first lay me to sleep
Where grand-papa is laid :
Is not the churchyard cold and dark,
And shan't I feel afraid ?

And will you every evening come,
And say my pretty prayer
Over poor Lucy's little grave,
And see that no one's there ?

And promise me that when you die,
That they your grave shall make
Next unto mine, that I may be
Close to you when I wake ?

Nay, do not leave me, dear mamma,
Your watch beside me keep ;
My heart feels cold—the room's all dark—
Now lay me down to sleep.

And should I sleep to wake no more,
Dear, dear mamma, good-bye :
Poor nurse is kind, but oh ! do you
Be with me when I die !"

FAITH AND SIGHT.

TWO children were standing at evening on the summit of a hill, watching the setting sun, as it seemed slowly to roll along the bright horizon.

"What a way," said the elder, "the sun has moved since we saw it coming from behind that tree!"

"And yet you remember," said the younger boy, "we learned, in this morning's lesson with our father, that the sun never moves at all."

"I know we did," replied the first; "but I do not believe it, because I see it is not so. I saw the sun rise there this morning, and I saw it set there to-night. How can a thing get all that distance without moving? You know very well, that if we did not move we should remain always just where we are upon the hill."

"But our father," said the other, "told us it is the earth that moves."

"That is impossible, too," replied the elder, "for you see it does not move. I am standing upon it now, and so are you, and it does not stir. How can you pretend to think it moves, while all the time it stands quietly under your feet?"



THE GIRLS OF EGYPT.

THE Egyptian girl who is shown in the picture returning from the bath belongs to the lower order of the people. We can tell this at a glance, for none but the poorest females ever show their faces, or put such marks upon them as this girl has done.

The females of the middle and upper classes are never seen unveiled. The veil—its quality differing according to the rank of the wearer—is passed across the face just below the eyes, and hangs down to the feet. If her veil ever falls off, and her face is seen, such a woman quickly adjusts it, and cries out, "Yá dáhwetée!" (Oh, my misfortune!) "Yá nedamtée!" (Oh, my sorrow!)

There is no country where the difference is greater between a rich and poor female than in Egypt. The rich lady is jealously guarded by her husband—shut constantly up in splendid apartments, and only permitted to come abroad under a convoy of servants. The poor girl, on the contrary, is a perfect drudge. Her husband marries her only that he may have some one to work for him, and he treats her as a slave. She has to fetch the water daily from the well, which is generally a long way from the house in Eastern countries; and she has to wait upon her husband at his meals, being herself never allowed to eat with him. Besides this, she has to spin for the whole family, and help to earn their livelihood. Sometimes she is permitted to walk out behind her husband, bearing his pipe until he requires it.

The bath-house is an important place in the East. Great state is made when a lady of rank goes there; but when a poor girl uses it, she has to carry all that she requires in a basket upon her head.

An English lady, who lived at Cairo some time since, was out sketching one morning, when a poor girl came and looked over her, and seemed much interested in what she saw. A conversation ensued,



Egyptian Girl returning from the Bath.

which began about the drawing, and went on till it came to religion, when it ran as follows :—

Girl. "Our religion tells us it is only the *men* who have souls, but I know we girls have souls, too."

Lady. "Have you ever heard where the soul goes to?"

Girl. "Yes, lady. To Paradise or Gehennem (hell)."

Lady. "When this (touching her arm) becomes dust, where will you go?"

Girl. "Marafseh! I do not know" (hanging down her head).

Lady. "You Mahometans are always afraid of death?"

Girl. "Oh, yes, greatly afraid. Are you not afraid?"

Lady. "Those who trust in Jesus never need fear death. It is better to be in heaven than here."

Zeynab, the girl, remained silent. She knew nothing about the Saviour. Raising her eyes, she noticed a ring upon the English lady's finger, and said,—

"I wish I had a ring like that."

"Well, Zeynab, in heaven they wear golden crowns."

"What!" cried the girl, eagerly; "of gold like that?"

"Far more beautiful; and they will wear robes of white."

"All white?" asked Zeynab, taking up her own soiled dress, which had been white once.

"Yes, white and beautiful, because their hearts are clean."

"Hearts clean? Oh, lady, I do not understand; but I wish I had a gold ring like yours."

Such is a specimen of the mind of a poor Egyptian girl. B.

the young would have let it go quickly. The shilling was a silver one, with very little alloy of copper; and it had been a whole year in the world, that is to say in the country where it had been coined.

One day, however, it went on a journey into foreign parts. It was the last piece of home-money that its master took with him on his travels. Indeed he did not know that he still had the shilling until he felt it under his finger. "Why! I declare," said he, "I have brought a shilling from home. Well! now it must make the journey with me." And the shilling rang and danced for joy when he put it back into his purse.

Here then it lay among strange companions who were ever coming and going, as one gave place to another; but the shilling from home always remained behind; and that was a great mark of distinction.

Many weeks had gone by already, and the shilling had gone a long way in the world without knowing very well where it was. True, it had heard from other coins that they were French, or Italian; one said that they were in this town, another that they were in that: but the shilling could get no notion of it for all that. For one sees nothing of the world if one sticks fast in a pocket, and that was its lot.

One day, however, as it lay there, it remarked that the purse was not shut, so it slid forward to the opening just to take a little peep; certainly it ought not to have done so, but it was inquisitive; and this brought its punishment. It slipped out into the trousers pocket, and when the purse was taken out at night, there lay the shilling where it had crept, and was taken out with the clothes into the hall. Of course it fell on the floor, but nobody heard, and nobody saw.

Next morning the clothes were taken back again into the room: the gentleman put them on, and went on his journey; but the shilling remained behind; then it was found, and had to go to service again, and was taken out with three other coins. "It is quite delightful to look about one in the world," thought the shilling, "and to learn about other people and other

THE SILVER SHILLING.

From the German.



HERE was once a shilling. It came forth bright from the mint, jumped up, and rang out—"Hurra! here we go into the wide world." And true it was. Out into the wide world it came.

Children held it in their warm hands. Thrifty folk, with cold grasping fingers turned it over and over many times, while

customs." "What sort of a shilling is this?" was cried out at the self-same moment. "This won't pass here!—it's bad!—it's good for nothing!"

And here begins the shilling's story, as he told it himself later.

"Bad! good for nothing! These words went through and through me," said the shilling. "I knew that I rung quite soundly, and that I had the right stamp—it was clear there was a mistake—they could not mean me; but they did mean me—it was I whom they called bad—it was I who was good for nothing.

"Ah! well, I must pass it in the dark," said the man who had taken me; and passed in the dark I was, and in the bright daylight was abused again. 'It's bad!' they said, 'it's good for nothing!—we must contrive to get rid of it.'"

And the shilling trembled between the fingers of the people, whenever it had to be smuggled away stealthily, and to pass for money of the country.

"Poor shilling that I was! what profit to me was my silver, my excellence, my stamp, when it all went for nothing? In the eyes of the world men are just worth as much as the world values them at, and no more.

"It must be a terrible thing to have a guilty conscience, to go sneaking about with underhand ways, when I, who am quite innocent, feel so much at the mere appearance of it. Every time they singled me out, I actually shuddered before the eyes that were going to look at me! I knew that I was going to be pushed back, or flung down on the table, as a deceiver and cheat! Once I came into the possession of a poor old woman: she took me as a day's wage for hard work; but she could not get quit of me in any way—nobody would take me. I was a real misfortune to the old dame. 'I really *must* take somebody in with this shilling!' said she: 'with the best will, I cannot keep a bad shilling; the rich baker shall have it, he can best bear the loss; but for all that, it's very wrong what I am doing.' 'And must I be a load on the conscience of the old woman, too?' sighed the shilling. 'Am I changed to this, in my old days?'

"So she betook herself to the rich baker; but he knew the money that was current far too well to take me. He flung me in the old body's face. No bread got she for me, and I did feel so vexed at heart that I should be coined for another's sorrow: I who in my young days had been so joyous, and so confident of my value and good coinage! I became as utterly sad as a poor shilling can be when no one will take it.

"However, the old woman took me back home again, looked at me with an affectionate, kindly gaze, and said—'No! I will not cheat any one with you. I will drive a hole in you, so that any one may see that you are bad, and—and—it just occurs to me—you are very likely a luck-penny! I'll drive a hole in it, and put a string through the hole, and hang it round the neck of my neighbour's youngest child for a luck-penny!'

"And so she drove a hole through me. Now it is not quite pleasant to have a hole driven right through one; but when it happens in a good cause, one is ready to bear a great deal. So a string was passed through, and I became a sort of locket, and they hung me round the neck of the little child. She laughed over me, and kissed me, and I rested one whole night on her warm, innocent breast.

"Next morning her mother took hold of me between her fingers, examined me, and what she thought about me I soon felt. She took a pair of scissors, and cut the string. 'Luck-penny, forsooth,' said she, 'we'll soon see that;' and she put me in vinegar till I turned quite green. Then she filled up the hole, rubbed me up a bit, and went in the dusk of the evening to a lottery-ticket clerk, to buy herself a number that should be a lucky one.

"How sick I felt! I got a pain, as if I was going to split. I knew that I was going to be called bad, and tossed on one side, and that too in the presence of all the coins which lay there, with their inscriptions and stamps, of which they might well be proud. But I escaped that disgrace; there were a great many people at the clerk's house, for he had so much to do, and I went rattling into the box with the rest of the money. Whether

that number did win afterwards I do not know. I know this full well, that next morning I was recognized at once as a bad shilling, and laid aside, and then sent out to deceive—aye! always to deceive. It is really intolerable, when one has a good character of one's own: and then I was not able of myself to refuse.

"For a year and a day, I went on this way from hand to hand, from house to house—always abused—always found out with anger. Nobody had any faith in me; but I had faith in myself, though not in the world. Ah me! that was a weary time.

"At last, there came one day a traveller who was a foreigner, to whom I was given in change, and who was generous enough to take me as current coin. But presently he was going to pass me; and again I heard the reproach—'Good for nothing! bad!' 'I took it as good,' said he, and looked at me attentively. Suddenly a smile lighted up his whole face: a thing which never used to happen when any one looked at me. 'Why! what is this?' cried he. 'This is one of our own country coins, a right-down good shilling from home, through which they have driven a hole, and which they called bad! Now that is really curious. I'll keep you, and take you home!'

"A thrill of joy ran through me. I was called a right-down good shilling, and I was to be taken home, where everybody would know me, and see that I am good silver, and that I bear the right stamp. I could have struck a light with joy: only that it's not my nature to throw out sparks. Steel can do that, but not silver.

"I was wrapped in fine white paper, so as not to be mixed with other money and paid away; and on great holidays, when people met together, I was brought out, and all sorts of civil speeches were made about me.

"And at last I got home. All my troubles had an end. Happiness was once more mine. I was good silver—I bore the right stamp—and I had no more misfortunes to put up with.

"And if they did drive a hole through me, as if I were bad, what does it matter

when one is not so? Only be good and persevere, and all will come right at last! —At least that is my belief," said the shilling.

AT A TURNING-POINT.

AS Thomas Bent was walking along the street one day, he saw a gentleman drop a purse on the side-walk. Thomas quickly picked it up, slipped it very slyly into his pocket, and walked on saying to himself, "I'm a lucky fellow! This purse feels as if there was a good lot of money in it. Hurrah for Tom Bent!"

Just then the boy's conscience woke up and whispered, "What are you going to do with that purse? It is not yours. If you keep it you will be a thief. Remember the eighth commandment, 'Thou shalt not steal.'"

Thomas paused a moment to think. Then with flashing eyes he ran after the gentleman, and handing him the purse said: "If you please, sir, you dropped your purse. Here it is."

"You are an honest boy," said the man, as he took the purse, and smiling pleasantly, handed him five shillings.

Thomas walked home, feeling happy indeed, as he had good reason to do. He had escaped a great danger. When he picked up that purse he was standing at a point where two roads met—one was the path of the thief, the other of the honest man. If he had kept the purse he would have entered the first path, and most likely have landed at last in a prison; by restoring it he entered the way of honesty and right. So, you see, he was at a turning-point in his life, and he turned it safely. Happy Thomas Bent!

Children, you now see what a *turning-point* is. Whenever you are met by a strong temptation to do a wrong act, you are at a turning-point. Let the temptation conquer you, and you will find yourselves in the wrong road. Conquer the temptation, and your feet will stand in the right way. Look out for turning-points.



"Thomas slipped the purse into his pocket."

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The Volume of the "PRIZE" for 1867 will be Ready on the 1st of December.

A beautiful Coloured Engraving will be given with the January Number of the "CHILDREN'S PRIZE FOR 1868." New Subscribers are requested to order their "Prize" immediately.

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[One Penny



"Look, mother! God has sent my boo's!"

WILLIE'S NEW BOOTS.

WILLIE was the child of a drunken father. His mother was a pious sorrow-stricken woman. One cold day, when the child's feet were chilled because of his worn-out boots, he said,—

"Mother, can't I have some new boots? My toes are all out of these. The snow gets in, and I am so cold!"

Tears rose in his mother's eyes as she answered, "Soon, Willie, I hope to give them to you."

He waited patiently several days, until one morning as he stood at the window watching the boys at play in the snow, he sobbed, "Oh, mother, it is *too* hard! Can't I get some boots anywhere?"

"Yes, Willie, you can."

"*Can I?*" he eagerly exclaimed. "Where? Where? Tell me quick!"

"Do you not know, my son?" replied his mother, "Think now."

Willie stood for a moment thinking, then with a smile he looked up into his mother's face, and said, "Oh, I know! God will give them to me, of course. Why didn't I think of that before? I'll go right off and ask Him."

He walked out of the parlour into his mother's room. He knelt down, and, covering his face with his hands, he prayed, "Oh, God! father drinks; mother has no money; my feet get cold and wet. I want some boots. Please send me a pair, for Jesus' sake. Amen."

This was all. He often repeated his pitiful petition, and the best of all was, he *expected* an answer to his prayer.

"They'll come, mother!" he would often say; "they'll come when God gets ready."

Within a week, a lady who loved the child came to take him out walking. He hesitated for a few moments, but soon determined to go, and they started off. At length the lady noticed his stockings peeping out at the toes of his boots, when she exclaimed, "Why, Willie, look at your feet! They will freeze. Why didn't you put on better boots?"

"These are all I have, ma'am."

"All you have! But why don't you have a new pair?" she inquired.

"I will just as soon as God sends them," he confidently replied.

Tears filled the lady's eyes, and, with a quivering lip, she took him into the nearest shoe-shop, saying, "There, child, choose any pair you please."

The boots were soon chosen, and a more happy, thankful boy never lived.

On his return he walked into the centre of the room where his mother was sitting, and, pulling his trousers up till you could see his knees, he said, "Look, mother! God has sent my boots! Mrs. Gray's money bought them, but God heard me ask for them, and I suppose He told Mrs. Gray to buy them for me." Then kneeling at his mother's feet, he said, "Jesus, I thank you for my new boots. Please make me a good boy, and take care of mother. Amen."

THE WRECKERS.

MANY of you, my dear children, have seen the sea, and have noticed the ships sailing with their cargoes of goods to foreign countries, and have seen many vessels laden with good things for us in England.

You have, perhaps, seen a storm at sea, and shuddered as you have noticed the vessels almost overwhelmed by the waves. You may have seen a wreck, and noticed the life-boat being hauled down to the beach, and watched the rough, but brave men jump into the boat, and row away through the dashing waves to save the lives of some unfortunate sailors on board the sinking vessel. But none of you, I think, have seen men bring a vessel into danger and wreck the crew on purpose. But, alas! this wicked act has often been done. I will tell you of a wreck that happened more than a hundred years ago, on the coast of Cornwall. It was a stormy night in December, and the wind howled around the rocks, making a noise like a pack of hungry wolves seeking for prey. There was no moon or star to be seen, and the beating rain pattered upon the windows of John Penquin's cottage, whilst a cold blast every now and then burst through the cracks of the door, and made

little Mary wrap the warm shawl more tightly round her shoulders, and made her creep close to the chimney-corner. Her mother was sitting near her, knitting worsted stockings for her father to wear when he went out fishing. John Penguin, Mary's father, sat trimming a lantern by the fireside. He was very moody and quiet, he did not even smoke his pipe that lay on the table near him. Rover, the dog, was restless and uneasy, and kept looking up into his master's face, as if he thought something was amiss. Now and then a tear trickled down the face of Mary's mother, but no one spoke.

At last John Penguin got up and called Rover in a gruff voice, took up the lantern, and went out. Mary's eyes followed her father to the door, and as he was going out she said, "Father, where are you going this cold night?" He said, in a hasty way, as if he did not like to be questioned, "Only to the village to get some tobacco;" and then banged the door after him. Presently Mary heard the voices of men outside, and the step of a horse; she looked out of the window and saw, to her astonishment, one of the men tie her father's lantern to the horse's tail, and lead him to the top of the cliffs.

"Mother," said Mary, "what are they doing that for?"

"Hush, my child!" she answered, sadly; "you will know soon enough. It is time you went to bed."

"May I sit up until father comes home to-night, mother?"

"No, not to-night," her mother replied.

So Mary went up-stairs and tried to lie down to sleep. She could not get out of her head the thought of her father's and her mother's strange manner, and the remembrance of the horse with the lantern tied to its tail troubled her.

She knew what men tied lanterns to horse's tails for generally, but her father never went with these men. And yet he had gone with them to-night! Could it be for some other purpose? She could not sleep, but got up to look. Ah! there it was—the lantern tossing up and down like the light of a ship at sea. She got up and went down-stairs.

"Mother," she said, "has father joined the wreckers?"

"I fear he has, my child; he must have been dreadfully tempted, or he never would have done this. He would not listen to me. He said we should soon starve if he did not get something, and that almost all the other men did the same."

Then Mary knew why this lantern had been tied to the horse's tail. It was in order that, as he moved it backwards and forwards, the people at sea might think it was another ship, and so draw nearer the coast and be wrecked on the rocks. She knew also that the wreckers did this in order that they might plunder the ship, and that they cared nothing about the lives of the crew. Her father, hitherto, had always been so kind and gentle to her and her mother, that she was willing to think he would do anything rather than help to destroy men's lives for the sake of plundering their vessels, and she hoped that she might even now save him ere it was too late; so she hastened up-stairs, dressed herself, and ran out to find him, and try and bring him home again.

Before Mary had got far the light was out, and she could not see or hear her father. But she heard something which made her blood run cold,—a vessel had struck the rocks, and the poor sailors were shrieking aloud for help, which, alas! never came to them.

Now let us go and find Mary's father. There he stands with the other men on the edge of the cliff, looking towards the wreck. He hears a piercing shriek, which makes him shudder to his very bones. Poor Rover gives a dismal howl, and rushes off towards the place from whence the sound came. John Penguin says, "Lads, I can stand this no longer, I shall go home;" but they so laughed at him that he stayed until the break of day.

As soon as it was light the wreckers began to pick up the scattered cargo of the vessel, whilst some come and take up the dead bodies. As John is about to seize upon a prize, his attention is called off by his dog. Rover comes to him howling and whining dismally, and keeps pulling his coat. John at last



follows the dog, and a few yards farther on he finds the dead body of a pretty, fair-haired girl, about nine years old. He stands and looks at it for a few moments, and falls in a swoon beside the body—it is the body of little Mary, his daughter! She had fallen down the cliff whilst looking for her father, and the scream he heard was her dying voice. Poor man! he has met with his punish-

ment. I need not tell you he never joined the wreckers again. Both he and Mary were carried home to his cottage, to the grief and dismay of his wife, who thought Mary was asleep in bed. John soon recovered, and became a wiser and a better man, and it is to be hoped that the sad lesson was not lost on the cruel wreckers who had enticed him from honest ways to the paths of sin.

W. M.



THE BROOK.

By Alfred Tennyson.

I COME from haunts of coot and her'n,
 I make a sudden sally,
 And sparkle out among the fern,
 To bicker down a valley.

By thirty hills I hurry down,
 Or slip between the ridges;
 By twenty thorps, a little town,
 And half a hundred bridges.
 Till last by Philip's farm I flow,
 To join the brimming river;
 For men may come and men may go,
 But I go on for ever.

I chatter over stony ways,
 In little sharps and trebles;
 I bubble into eddying bays,
 I babble on the pebbles.

With many a curve my banks I fret,
 By many a field and fallow,
 And many a fairy foreland set
 With willow, weed, and mallow.

I chatter, chatter as I flow
 To join the brimming river;
 For men may come and men may go,
 But I go on for ever.

I wind about, and in and out,
 With here a blossom sailing,

And here and there a lusty trout,
 And here and there a grayling;
 And here and there a foamy flake
 Upon me as I travel,
 With many a silvery waterbreak,
 Above the golden gravel.

And draw them all along, and flow
 To join the brimming river;
 For men may come and men may go,
 But I go on for ever.

I steal by lawns and grassy plots,
 I slide by hazel covers;
 I move the sweet forget-me-nots
 That grow for happy lovers.

I slip, I slide, I gloom, I glance.
 Among my skimming swallows:
 I make the netted sunbeams dance
 Against my sandy shallows.

I murmur, under moon and stars,
 In brambly wildernesses;
 I linger by my shingly bars,
 I loiter round my cresses;

And out again I curve and flow
 To join the brimming river;
 For men may come and men may go,
 But I go on for ever.



GORGÓ.

ANY hundred years ago, there was a king of Sparta, whose people like himself had been trained to war and hardship from their childhood. They used to think that the best thing for any one to learn was how to fight; and even the little boys of that land would rather die than complain of anything being too hard for them to bear. As it was a heathen land and none knew of the true God who is *kind* as well as powerful, some of their laws were severe and cruel; but they had many wise and good ones, especially they had good rules, which would be much the better if even now in England, about the respect which all young persons ought to pay to the aged, and also they were trained to avoid anything that was considered dishonourable.

A message was one day sent to the king, during a war, asking him to do something which he knew to be wrong; and Cleomenes, for that was the king's name, ordered the bearer of it to depart. But the messenger, having a secret hope that the king would yield, followed him to the palace and renewed the proposal, presenting at the same time a costly gift. Perhaps the king wavered and began to think how he could comply without vexing his people; but a girl of nine years named Gorgo was playing in the room, and, hearing the proposal, she cried out "My father, fly; this stranger will corrupt you."

The warrior smiled; he had never known what it was to fly from danger; but he followed his little daughter's advice and left the messenger who had tried to tempt him to dishonour.

If a heathen child could influence her father to act rightly, will not little girls in happy English homes try, not only to do the best and truest things themselves, but to help, by a word or look, brothers, sisters, and friends, who may be inclined to do wrong?

SCENES IN THE LIFE OF ST. PETER

RESCUED FROM PRISON BY AN ANGEL.

Acts, xii. 1-17.



WHEN St. Peter went up to Jerusalem, to explain to the Apostles there how the gift of the Holy Ghost had been given to Cornelius and other Gentiles, Herod the king put him in prison. Herod had just before killed James the brother of John with the sword; and because he saw it pleased the Jews, he took Peter also, and cast him into prison.

Peter had been in prison twice before at least (Acts, iv. 3; v. 18); and on one of these times the angel of the Lord by night opened the prison doors, and set him free (Acts, v. 19). Perhaps Herod may have heard of this, and so he now took care that the Apostle should not escape, for he delivered him to four quaternions of soldiers to keep him. A quaternion was a company of four soldiers, and most likely each quaternion took charge of the prisoner for one watch of three hours. At night two of these four soldiers watched outside the door of the cell, and the other two were bound with chains to the prisoner, who lay between them; and so the very night before the day on which Herod was going to bring St. Peter out to execute him before the people, the Apostle was sleeping between two soldiers, bound with two chains. Though he expected that in a few hours he was to die, he yet slept peacefully, for he knew that death would be the end of all his labours and sufferings—would be the beginning of eternal happiness and rest. But it was not so to be; for, behold, the angel of the Lord came upon him, and smote Peter on the side, and raised him up, saying, *Arise up quickly. And his chains fell off from his hands. Then the angel said unto him, Gird thyself, and bind on thy sandals. And so he did.*

And He saith unto him, Cast thy garment about thee, and follow me.

Doubtless, deep sleep from the Lord had fallen on the soldiers and on the keepers of the prison, so that they did not hear or see what was passing; while St. Peter himself knew not that it was true which was done by the angel, but thought he saw a vision.

The angel led the way *past the first and second ward*—that is, past the two gates of the prison at which guards were stationed—and brought the Apostle to the iron gate that leadeth unto the city; which opened to them of its own accord: and they passed on through one street, and then the angel departed from him.

St. Peter could no longer think that it was all a vision. He found himself in the well-known street, with no chains on his hands and feet, with no Roman soldiers near, with no prison walls around him. *And when he was come to himself he said, Now I know that the Lord hath sent His angel and delivered me out of the hand of Herod, and from all the expectation of the people of the Jews.*

When he had considered what it would be best for him to do, he went to the house of Mary the mother of John, whose surname was Mark. And he found many gathered together praying; for prayer was made without ceasing by the Church unto God for St. Peter during his imprisonment.

As Peter knocked at the door a damsel came to hearken, named Rhoda. It was the dead of night. Herod's soldiers would persecute any who were known to be disciples of Christ, so it was no wonder the door was barred—no wonder that Rhoda stopped to find out who was knocking, before she opened the door.

As soon as she knew Peter's voice, she was so glad that in her eagerness she forgot to open the door, but ran in, and told how Peter stood before the gate.

And those who were in the house, though they had been praying for Peter's deliverance, could not believe that God had heard their prayers; they said to Rhoda, *Thou art mad.* And when she said again and again that it was really so, then said they, *It is his angel*—meaning his guardian angel, or perhaps his ghost.

All this time Peter continued knocking; and when they had opened the door and saw him they were astonished: but he, beckoning unto them with his hand to be silent, told them how the Lord had brought him out of prison. And then he departed, and went into another place.

As soon as it was day, there was no small stir among the soldiers what was become of Peter; and when Herod had sought for him, and could not find him, he was furious; and when he had examined the keepers and could not learn how the prisoner had escaped, he commanded that they should be put to death.

One short lesson all may gather from this story, which is, that when we cannot help our friends by money, or might, or wisdom, we may help them by praying to God for them. St. Peter's friends were weak, poor, timid, while Herod was mighty, his prison strong, his soldiers fierce; yet when those feeble folk prayed for their friend, God delivered him from the power of Herod: and in like manner, when our loved ones are in pain or trouble, or far away from us, God can help them though we cannot, and if it is best for them, and for us, He will help them in answer to our prayers.

THE FIRE-FLY.

A STORY OF GOD'S PROVIDENCE.

From the German of Canon Schmidt.

ON the evening of a sultry autumn day, Maria, a poor widow, sat at the window of her little room, which opened on a pretty garden and orchard which surrounded her cottage. Ferdinand, her boy, of six years of age, whom she had been making ready for bed, sat in her lap, and she was caressing the little feet, as she sat before the charcoal stove, on which she had just prepared their simple supper of bread and milk. She herself had scarcely tasted any, for she was in great trouble; and little Ferdinand, when he saw his mother so sad, instead of eating, soon laid aside his spoon, and the bowl was left on the stove almost as full as at first.



"The angel led the way."



"She was caressing the little feet."

Maria only became a widow early in the spring. Her husband, one of the best young men in the village, had by industry and thrift saved enough to buy the cottage and its garden, though not without

some debt upon it. The diligent man had planted the beautiful green spot with young trees, which now were bearing their choicest fruits. He had chosen Maria or his wife, though she was a poor orphan,

and her parents had left her no dowry but her good bringing-up. She was reckoned the most pious and industrious girl in the whole village. They had lived happily together. Then the fever broke out in the village, and her good husband died of it. She, who nursed him with devoted love, was seized with it immediately after he died, and nearly died too.

Through her own and her husband's illness she had lost a great deal, and now she feared that she would lose also her little cottage. Her late husband had for a long time been in the service of the richest farmer in the place, named Meierbauer, who had greatly esteemed him on account of his faithful diligence, and offered to sell him this house and garden for three hundred florins, on condition that he should pay twenty-five florins yearly till the whole sum should be paid. This he had regularly done till the year when he fell ill, and his debt then only amounted to fifty florins more. Maria knew all this very well.

But now Meierbauer died of the same fever. The heirs, his daughter and son-in-law, found the note for the three hundred florins among the papers of the deceased. They knew nothing about its history, as the farmer had never spoken a word to them about it; so they demanded the whole sum of the poor widow. The terrified woman protested that her late husband had paid it all except fifty florins. But all her assertions were of no avail. The young farmer summoned her before the tribunal of justice. As she could not prove that anything had been paid, she was condemned to pay the whole sum. The heirs pressed for payment, and as poor Maria had nothing but her cottage with its garden, she felt that her little property must be sold. She had fallen on her knees before the heirs, and prayed them not to turn her out; her little Ferdinand had knelt beside her. Both had wept, but all was in vain. To-morrow, alas! was fixed for the auction. This she had only heard from a neighbour an hour before.

So she sat thoroughly downcast: now she looked up at the bright moonlit sky, now down at her little Ferdinand; now

tears trickled down her cheek. "Alas! thought she, 'the first yellow plums which I gathered to-day for my Ferdinand are the last fruits which the poor boy will taste from the trees which his father planted for him with so great care! Yes, this is, perhaps, the last night we shall pass here. To-morrow at this time our home will belong to another, and who knows whether he will not turn us out at once? God knows where we shall find a night's lodging to-morrow! Perhaps in the open air.'" She began to sob violently.

Little Ferdinand, who had lain in her arms, nearly asleep, now was roused by his mother's sobbing, and said, "Dear mother, do not weep. Don't you know what father said when he was dying there, in the bed? 'Don't weep so,' he said; 'God is the father of the widows and orphans. Call upon Him in trouble. He will care for you.' Is not that what he said, and is it not true?"

"Yes, dear child," said his mother; "it is, indeed!"

"Well, then," said the little fellow, "why do you weep so much? Pray to the good God, and He will help you. Oh, when I used to go with father into the forest, when he cut wood there, and when I was hungry, or when I had trodden upon a thorn, I did not cry for long. I went to father and asked him, and he put down his axe and gave me some bread, or drew the thorn out. And will not the good God help us, too? He is not so hard-hearted as that rich man before whom we both knelt down and begged for mercy, and who almost kicked us away from him, and drove us to the door. Or is God not rich enough to help us? He must be much richer than Meierbauer. Only just look out of the window! why the moon and stars belong to Him! Father used often to say, 'The whole world belongs to Him.' Why, then, should we weep and trouble ourselves? Come, let us ask God. He surely will help us. Only begin, mother, and I will try to help you to ask Him."

"Dear child, you are right," said the mother; and she clasped her hands and raised her streaming eyes to Heaven, and

the boy clasped his little hands too, and looked heavenward. Then the mother began to pray, and the little one repeated every word after her:—"Dear Father in heaven," she said, "oh, look down upon a poor mother and her child! A poor widow and a poor orphan look up to Thee. We are in great distress, and have no longer any refuge upon earth. Oh, we beseech Thee, cast us not out of this cottage! Or if this be Thy will, oh, let us find in Thy wide earth another little spot, and give us comfort in our hearts, that they may not break when we have to go away from our own dear home——"

The mother could not speak any more for sobbing; she looked up to heaven weeping, and was silent. Then the little one, who was still kneeling with clasped hands, jumped up and exclaimed in a loud voice, and with outstretched finger, "Oh, mother, look there! what is that? There is a light floating about! There is a little star flying! Look! it is flying in at the window! Oh, look now! it is coming in! How bright it shines! Now it is on the floor! It is wonderful!"

"That is a fire-fly, dear Ferdinand," said the mother. "By daylight it looks like a common fly, but at night it has that beautiful brightness."

"May I catch it?" said the boy. "Will it hurt me? and shall I be burned by the light?"

"It won't burn you," said the mother, smiling through her tears. "Take it up and look at it; it is one of the wonders of Almighty God."

The boy had now forgotten all his grief, and was chasing the bright fire-fly which flitted about, first under the table, then under a chair. But soon he called out in dismay, "Oh, dear! the bright little thing, just as I was stretching out my hand to take it, it hid itself under the great chest near the wall." He looked under the chest—"Oh, I see it plainly," he said: "there it sits, close to the wall; but I can't reach it, my arm is too short."

"Only have patience," said his mother, "it will soon come out again."

(Concluded in our next.)

THE LADIES OF EGYPT.

THE upper classes of women in Egypt pass their whole lives in a state of luxury and idleness. Not being allowed to show their faces, or be seen on foot out-of-doors, they have to find all their pleasures and amusements in their own apartments, which are called "harems."

These places are little more than splendid prisons. The ladies' apartments are generally quite distinct from other parts of the house, and are fitted up with great elegance. The windows are few, and are always high up in the wall, never opening into the street, but always into an inner court.

The ladies of Egypt are permitted sometimes, but not often, to receive a few female friends, and now and then an English lady gets admittance. The following is an account of a visit paid to the harem of some ladies of high rank in Cairo, by Mrs. Poole:—

Having been admitted into the house, and conducted through a marble court under the guidance of male slaves, the visitor was met by some female slaves of dark complexion, natives of Galla, who removed her veil and led her to a young lady who gave the Eastern salutation of touching the lips and forehead with the right hand.

She was then led into the divan and placed upon the seat of honour, a cushion on the right hand of the chief lady of the house. Others salutations passed, and then slave girls brought sweetmeats round on silver trays, which was followed by coffee, also brought on silver trays. The cups were of silver filagree very costly and beautiful. The coffee was not handed on the tray, but presented by the hand. After this, a short time was spent in conversation, and then sherbet was served in elegant cut-glass cups with covers, handed on silver waiters. One slave presented the sherbet, and another followed her with an embroidered napkin to wipe the mouth.

Before the English lady took her departure, she was conducted through the house, the magnificence of which astonished



An Egyptian Lady waited upon by her Slave.

her, though she was used to the East. Room beyond room, each with its costly carpets and cushions of silk; the ceilings

and walls covered with beautiful patterns —gilded columns and staircases, with lattices opening upon delightful gardens,

and perfumed fountains thrown up from pavements of mosaic work, were some of the things she saw.

When the time for departure came, the ladies of the house took the visitors' veil from the hands of the slave girls, and habited their guest themselves—a mark of great condescension and respect in an Eastern lady. After this, she was saluted by all, and then committed to the male slaves to be led out of the house.

These poor ladies, shut up as they are, and never permitted to travel, or see anything different from day to day, are like birds in gilded cages. Their time is passed in dressing and being undressed, in being fanned and waited upon. Except doing a little embroidery sometimes, their lives are quite wasted. Most of them have never been taught how to read! How different from the pleasures and usefulness of an English lady!

B.



AGRA.

AGRA is one of the great cities of North India, built at various times by the Mahometans, but it has been for the last two hundred years in the possession of the English.

No city of the world has more magnificent buildings in and about it than Agra. The palace, built by the Emperor Akbar in 1570, has walls a mile round. They contain, besides other buildings, the palace, the fort, and a temple called the "Pearl Mosque," built entirely of white marble without a particle of any other

substance. The palace has gilded domes, and it is reckoned that upon it alone Akbar must have spent a large fortune. It commands a magnificent view over the river Jumna, as seen in the picture.

In the right hand corner of the picture, you will see in the distance the dome and minarets of another large building. This is the Taj-Mahal, built by a bad king, Akbar's grandson, as a tomb. It is allowed to be the most magnificent building in Asia. Marble is the meanest thing about it.

Then not far off is the tomb of Akbar

himself, which is also a pile of great grandeur. It has an enormous dome supporting arched verandahs and marble chambers. On the summit is a smooth space on which is engraved the name "Akbar," and no more. The gateway to this tomb alone is as large as a small castle, which may give some notion of the size of the building.

In the year 1857, Agra was in a state of siege on account of the mutiny which spread through North India. Dreadful events took place at that time, and the sufferers were mostly English. In the palace of Agra, a mixed multitude from all the surrounding country took refuge. There were English, Americans, French, Italians, Germans, Russians, and natives, Jews, nuns, missionaries, merchants, &c., all of whom had to share a common portion. At length they were relieved, and Agra was saved, but the place suffered so from the mutiny, that it has not recovered its former importance. W.

EVENING.

IN WORDS OF ONE SYLLABLE.

By Thomas Miller.

THE day is past, the sun is set,
And the white stars are in the sky;
While the long grass with dew is wet,
And through the air the bats now fly.

The lambs have now lain down to sleep;
The birds have long since sought their nests;
The air is still; and dark and deep
On the hill-side the old wood rests.

Yet of the dark I have no fear,
But feel as safe as when 'tis light,
For I know God is with me there,
And He will guard me through the night.

Yes, God is by me when I pray;
And when I close mine eyes in sleep
I know that He will with me stay,
And all night long watch by me keep.

For He who rules the stars and sea,
Who makes the grass and trees to grow,
Will look on a poor child like me,
When on my knees to Him I bow.

He holds all things in His right hand,
The rich, the poor, the great, the small;
And when we sleep, or sit, or stand,
Is with us, for He loves us all.

CHARLIE AND HARRY.

CHARLIE and Harry were two little boys who were left one day in a room to play by themselves, for it was too wet to go out-of-doors. Charlie was six years old, and could read very well; Harry was only four years old, and could not read at all. He was such a little boy that we must forgive him for what I am going to tell you. Charlie was a good little boy, and so was Harry when he was not cross; but he had not been out for his walk that morning, and he was tired of being in the house all day; and I am sorry to say he felt cross. At first they played very happily, but after a time they began to quarrel. It was a little thing that they quarrelled about. Charlie had a bad fault of teasing, which is tiresome and disagreeable, and he began to tease Harry to let him have his new whip. "Do, Harry! let me have your whip a little! Do, Harry! Oh, do!"

"No! no! naughty Charlie! my whip, not yours! Go away, I say!" And oh, how cross Harry did look, poor little boy!

Now, it was odd—do you not think it was?—that as Harry said that and looked so cross, a little black dog should be in the room? How do you think he came in? I am afraid that Harry had left either the door or the windows open; perhaps both: but it *had* got in, that is quite certain. Charlie saw the dog quite well, but Harry could not see it because it had got upon his back. Charlie began to be frightened, for as Harry got more and more cross the black dog got bigger and bigger. Oh, how big he was! Now, Charlie knew quite well that poor little Harry should not have let that black dog get in, and that he had not been quite good himself; so he thought a little,—“If I had not teased so, perhaps that ugly black dog would not have got in at all.” So he came up to Harry and said, pleasantly, “Keep the whip, Harry: I don’t want it just now.”

Harry was silent for a minute, and then said, “You *may* play with the whip, Charlie,” and gave it up to him. “I am sorry I was so cross to you.”

So the two little boys made friends, and

went to play quite happy. And now see! The dog is gone—quite gone, as soon as Harry said he was sorry and they had made friends again.

Now, little readers, what do you think is that black dog? It is not a real dog, but *cross temper*, which makes you all look quite as ugly as if you had a real black dog on your back. The door is your mouth, and the windows are your eyes. Try not to say a cross word with your mouths, or to look cross with your eyes; but if you should get cross, be friends again very soon, and then you will be quite happy like Charlie and Harry.

A LITTLE BIT OF ADVICE TO A LITTLE FRIEND.

A BRIGHT little girl I know, just nine years old,
Has a tiresome habit, whenever she's told
To bring, or to take for mamma, aunt, or cousin,
Of asking them questions—at least half-a-dozen.
“How?” “Which?” “When?” and “Where?”
“Who?” “What?” “Why?” and “Wherefore?”
A great deal of trouble she gives to them therefore.
Now this dear little girl I would gladly see cured
Of the troublesome trick we so long have endured;
So a word of advice I will give in *The Prize*,
In that way it is sure to come under her eyes.
“Will you turn over first, in your own little head,
Exactly the words your mamma has just said?
Was it ‘right hand’ or ‘left?’ Was it ‘down stairs,’ or ‘up?’
Did she ask for a pen? or a pin? or a cup?
Did she give you a message to take to your brother?
Or an order to nurse, or to cook, or some other?
Think it all over quietly; say word by word
The errand or message you just now have heard.
Then ‘How,’ ‘When,’ and ‘Where,’ will not often be needed,
And a good, useful girl, on her task will be speeded.”

J. E. C. F.

WHAT THE VERSE OF A HYMN MAY DO.

WHAT a dreadful day was the 14th of September, 1796, for the small Hessian town of Lisberg, built on the wooded heights of the Vogelberg. Between nine and ten o'clock at night, 500 fugitives of the French army, which had just been defeated by the Archduke Charles, fled through the city, breathing vengeance; and after they had destroyed, murdered, and plundered for many hours, they set fire to the town at all points, so that fifty-eight dwellings were burnt to the ground.

On the slope of the hill stood a cottage, where a mother sat at the bed of her sick child. From fear of endangering the life of her darling she would not, in the cold September day, flee with it to the woods, as most of the inhabitants had done. But now, when the firing and murdering began in the place, and the smoke of the burning houses came down from the hill into the valley, then the poor lone woman was fearful unto death; she bolted the door of the cottage, and threw herself on her knees in prayer beside the cradle of her child. Thus she remained a long time, trembling as she listened to the shouts of the soldiers and the shrieks of their victims: at last her door was struck by the butt-end of a musket; and it quickly flew open, and a Frenchman rushed in, pointing his bayonet at the horrified woman. The mother laid her hands over her child, and with a voice of despair she prayed aloud the verse of Gerhardt's hymn:—

“My Jesus, stay thou by me,
And let no foe come nigh me,
Safe sheltered by thy wing;
But should the foe alarm me,
Oh! let him never harm me,
But still thine angels round me sing.”

Suddenly the soldier lowered his deadly weapon, stepped to the cradle, and laid his rough hand softly on the child's head, his lips moved as if in prayer, and tear-drops fell over his bearded face. Then he gave his hand to the mother and went away in silence. After some time she arose from her knees, and looked out of the little window, and behold! there stood the Frenchman, his musket on his arm, He had made



"She prayed aloud."

himself the sentinel to protect the house and its inmates from all insult or harm. At last, when the whole troop, laden with

booty, marched off, he left his post, with a greater treasure in his heart than his comrades in their sacks. J. F. C.

The Volume of the "PRIZE" for 1867 will be Ready on the 15th of November.

A beautiful Coloured Engraving, "I'M GRANDFATHER," will be given with the January number of the "CHILDREN'S PRIZE," 1868. New Subscribers are requested to order their "Prize" immediately.

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THE CHILDREN'S PRIZE

No. XII.]

DECEMBER, 1867.

[One Penny.]



The Holly-tree Bough.

THE HOLLY-TREE BOUGH.

I LIKE this glad season as yearly it comes,
With cold to our meadows and mirth to
our homes;

I like in the landscape, when whitened with
snow,
To mark the green leaves of the holly-tree
bough.

I like, in the merry fresh days of the spring,
To mark the trees budding and hear the birds
sing;

And now, while our holiday feelings o'er-flow,
How cheerfully bright is the holly-tree bough.

I like, in the warmth of the summer-sunned
hours,

To wander at will in the sweet leafy bowers;
But better I like now to join in the glow
Of social delight 'neath the holly-tree bough.

Then gather it quickly, the berries and spray,
And hang it up high on this festival day;
Let wit, mirth, and music, unitedly flow
All soberly under the holly-tree bough.

CHRISTMAS-DAY AT THE
FOUNDLING.

CHRISTMAS-DAY brings with
it so much happiness, and so
many pleasant treats to boys
and girls who have happy
homes that it is a sorrowful
thing to think there are any
children without parents to
be kind to them.

In London there is a large
building where numbers of
boys and girls live who have no kind father
nor mother to look after them, and Christ-
mas-day, one might fancy, would be dull
there, but our Heavenly Father has put it
into the hearts of good men and women
to try to make these children happy at
the season when we love to recall the
fact that the Lord Jesus was once a little
Child.

Shall I tell you what Isabel and Mary
saw last Christmas when they went to the
Foundling? First, in the chapel, during
the morning service, they heard the chil-
dren sing the hymns and psalms with such
sweet voices; then they saw them march

into the long dining-halls that were made
to look like summer bowers by the fes-
toons and chains of evergreens, decorated
with bright-coloured paper flowers, which
were suspended from the ceilings and side
walls. Along the rooms were the narrow
tables covered with snow-white cloths, and
on each plate was a large piece of plum-
pudding and two golden-coloured oranges.
The boys stood by their places, and then
the elder ones, at the sound of a little ham-
mer, which the master struck on the table,
began to blow their horns, and all the
others sang the grace; then there was
another tap on the table, and the boys
took their seats, and very pleased they
seemed with the large pieces of pudding
set before them. Christmas-day is the
only day in the year when they have any
other pudding than rice. Now I know
many little boys and girls who are very
tired of rice-pudding, although they often
have other nice things to eat, so we cannot
wonder at these poor little Foundling
children being glad when Christmas-day
comes round. Then Isabel and Mary went
to the girls' dining-rooms, where there
were numbers of girls in clean white
tippets and aprons, and high starched caps.
Some were big and some were little, but
all dressed alike, just as if a party of
your great-grandmamas had stepped out
of their picture-frames and come down to
eat plum-pudding and oranges.

In the room for the younger children,
a little dot of a child, about two and a half
years old, dressed in a high mob cap, was
running about putting her tiny foot
against those of the visitors, and lisped
out, "Medjer my oot," looking so merry
all the time, and quite undismayed by the
crowd of lookers-on. By-and-bye she was
called by her governess to her place, and
there, standing between the tables where
the other little mites were sitting, she
folded her fat dimpled hands together and
said grace with her baby lips; then the
dinner began, and the children quickly ate
their slices of pudding. The little one who
had said grace was ready to share hers
with any one who spoke to her, and with
the greatest generosity was picking the
raisins out from her piece and offering

them to the little girls amongst the visitors.

On the walls were pleasant Christmas wishes, and texts of Scripture, prettily arranged in green leaves on a white ground, with white flowers on the leaves. The texts telling of the love of God towards man in sending His Son to take our nature upon Him, ought to bring to the thoughts of all the cause of this rejoicing; and it is well when boys and girls remember to Whom they owe all their happiness, and while enjoying the good things which Christmas brings, recollect those who have not the same blessings, and try to make them happy too.

THE BIBLE.

THE following is a calculation of the number of books, verses, and letters, contained in the Old and New Testaments. They are worth reading and preserving:—

Old Testament.—Number of books, 39; chapters, 929; verses, 33,214; words, 592,439; letters, 2,728,100.

The middle book is Proverbs.

The middle chapter is Job xxix.

The middle verse would be 2 Chronicles, xx. 17, if there were a verse more, and verse 18 if there were a verse less.

The word "and" occurs 35,543 times.

The word "Jehovah" occurs 6855 times.

The shortest verse is 1 Chronicles, i. 25.

The 21st verse of 7th chapter of Ezra contains all the letters of the alphabet.

The 19th chapter of 2 Kings and the 37th chapter of Isaiah are alike.

New Testament.—Number of books, 27; chapters, 260; verses, 7050; words, 181,258; letters, 828,580.

The middle book is 2 Thessalonians.

The middle chapter would be Romans xiii. if there were a chapter less, and xiv. if there were a chapter more.

The middle and least verse is John, xi. 35.

Old and New Testaments.—Number of books, 66; chapters, 1189; verses, 40,264; words, 773,697; letters, 3,556,680.

The middle chapter and least in the Bible is the 117th Psalm.

The middle verse is Psalm cxviii. 8.

THE BOY AND THE BEE.

JOHNNY was just three years old. Of course, he had seen very little of the world, and had much to learn. One warm, bright afternoon, while playing in the garden, he learnt a lesson which he remembers still.

In the rich, green grass, a bright yellow dandelion caught his eye, but he did not notice a singular-looking spot about the middle of the flower. That spot was nothing else than a merry honey-bee, who came singing alone through the air in search of honey and wax, and stopped to see if that flower had any for him. Quick as thought down went the little fat hand, and back again it came as quickly, bringing in its grasp flower, bee, and all.

The poor bee was very much surprised at this sudden change. He thought that the sky or something else had fallen on him. But whatsoever might have been the case, he was resolved not to give up his life without a struggle; and so, twisting his little body around, he sent up his sharp, poisoned sting, deep into Johnny's hand. And didn't nurse hear a scream from Johnny's lungs? And while she ran to help the suffering child the bee gathered himself up and set out for home, wondering what in the world such little two-legged pests as boys were made for.

But the sting had not only marked Johnny's hand, but had written this lesson in his memory—that sometimes very pretty things have very sharp stings.

Wine looks very pretty in the glass; but the Bible says that if we become fond of drinking it, it will "bite like a serpent, and sting like an adder."

Sin often looks inviting, but the Bible tells us that "the sting of death is sin."

A little boy once asked his mother for a peach. She asked him if he had not already eaten one. To get another he told a lie, and said "No." But after he went to bed that lie stung him so that he was afraid to go to sleep till he had called his mother, confessed his sin, and asked her pardon.

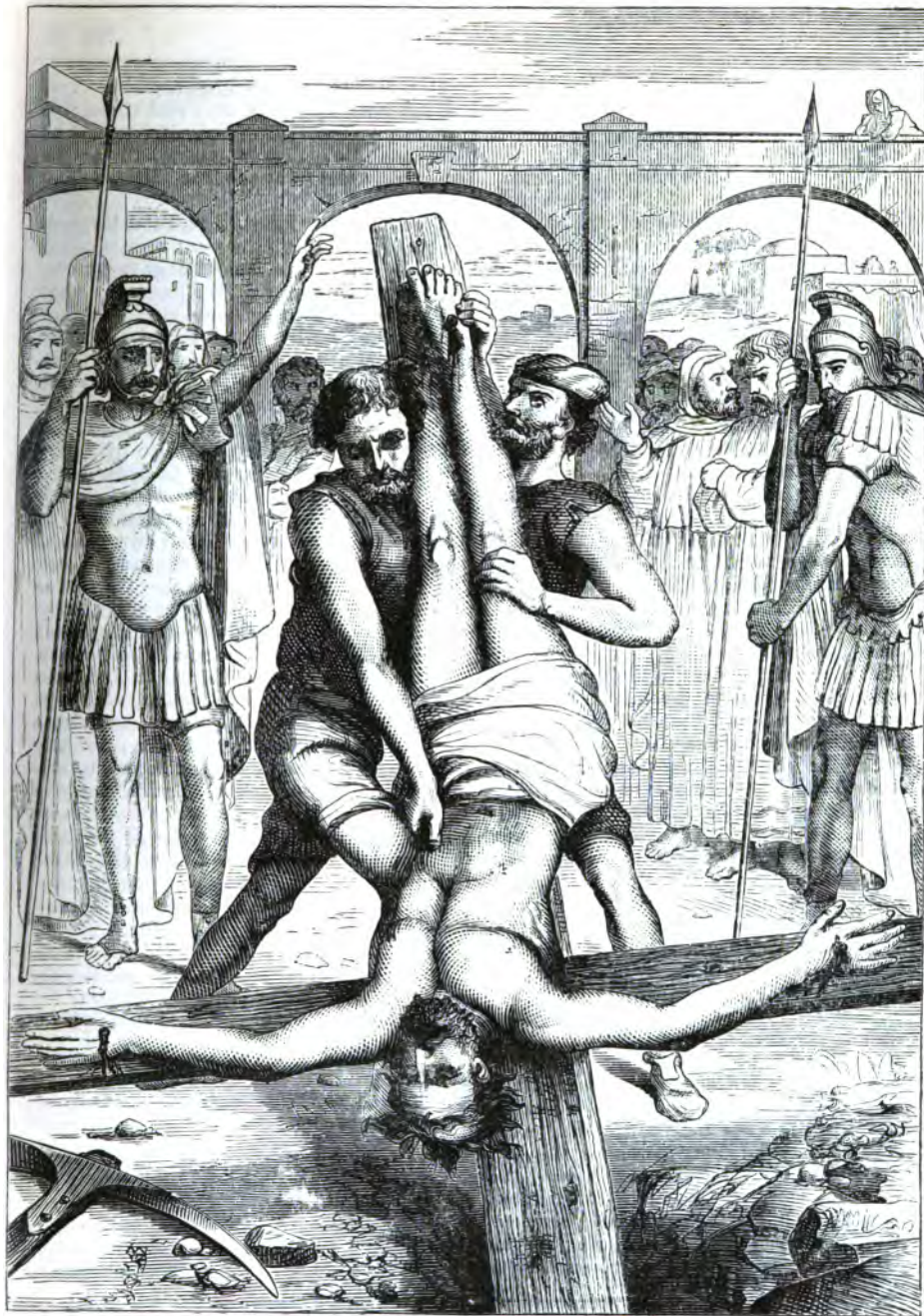
I hope our readers will remember that sometimes very pretty things have very sharp stings.—*Child's Own Magazine.*



KNEEL, MY CHILD.

KNEEL, my child, for God is here;
 Bow in love, but not in fear;
 Kneel before Him now in prayer,
 Thank Him for His constant care;
 Praise Him for His bounties shed
 Every moment on thy head;
 Ask for light to know His will;

Ask for love thy heart to fill;
 Ask for faith to bear thee on,
 In the name of Christ His Son;
 Ask for peace to lull to rest
 Every tumult of thy breast;
 Ask in awe, but not in fear:
 Kneel, my child, for God is here.



"He was rewarded with a martyr's crown"

SCENES IN THE LIFE OF ST. PETER.

THE CLOSING SCENE.



LITTLE is known of the later years of St. Peter's life, and little of the closing scene—his death.

It is generally agreed that he lived for about thirty-five years after the Crucifixion of Christ, and that he spent the time in travelling from land to land, preaching the Gospel to those who knew it not, and confirming the churches that had been already founded; for he writes his Epistles to those in *Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia* (1 Pet. i. 1). In his old age he is thought to have travelled into Mesopotamia and Chaldæa, for he wrote his first Epistle from Babylon, where there were multitudes of Jews.

The place and circumstances of his death are not known with any certainty. There are two passages in the holy writings which go to confirm the tradition that he was martyred, and that he was crucified with his head downwards.

On the shore of the Sea of Tiberias Jesus, after His resurrection, said to Peter, *When thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee and carry thee whither thou wouldest not*; and it is added, *This spake He, signifying by what death he (Peter) should glorify God.* (St. John, xxi. 18, 19.)

And St. Peter, in his second Epistle, refers to these words of his Master, as telling him of his death: *Knowing that shortly I must put off this my tabernacle, even as our Lord Jesus Christ hath showed me.* (2 Pet. i. 14.)

An ancient writer says that crucifixion with the head downwards was a common and terrible form of death in the region round about Babylon, where St. Peter lived for some time; and it is also said, that those who were put to death in this way were bound to the cross, supported by a girdle round the hips, and that this was what our Lord meant when He told

Peter that another should gird him. Tradition also tells that St. Peter chose this manner of death for himself, because he did not think that he was worthy to die in the same way as his Master had died.

We have now followed St. Peter through some of the most important scenes of his life. We have seen some things to lament, and more to admire. We have seen that even he fell into grievous sin; but that God raised him up, and that he became one of His most honoured servants in spreading the Gospel, and at last was rewarded with a martyr's crown.

From this last scene we may learn that it is not only by *doing*, but also by *suffering*, that we bring glory to God, for Jesus told Peter *by what death he should glorify God*; and though we live in a land and in a time where we are not likely to be called to lay down our lives for the sake of our religion, yet we must remember that there are ways in which even children may glorify God, and we should often pray that Collect for Holy Innocents' Day which teaches us this:—"O Almighty God, who out of the mouths of babes and sucklings hast ordained strength, and madest infants to *glorify* thee by their deaths; Mortify and kill all vices in us, and so strengthen us by thy grace, that by the innocence of our lives, and the constancy of our faith even unto death, we may *glorify* thy holy Name; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen."

THE SQUIRREL.

THE squirrel is happy, the squirrel is gay,"

Said Harry one day to his brother;

"He has nothing to do, or to think of, but play,

And to jump from one tree to another."

But William was older and wiser; he knew,

That all play and no work would not answer:
So he asked what in winter the squirrel would do,

If he passed all the summer a dancer?

"The squirrel," dear Harry, "is merry and wise,

For true wisdom and mirth go together:

So he gathers in summer his winter supplies,
And then he don't mind the cold weather."

THE FIRE-FLY.

(Continued from page 171.)

THE boy waited a little, and then came to his mother and said, in a gentle voice, "Mother, do please get it out for me, or move the chest a little away from the wall for me."

The mother got up and moved the chest, and the boy took the fire-fly and gazed on it as it lay in the palm of his hand.

But the mother had noticed something else. When she moved the chest, something which had stuck between the chest and the wall fell down upon the floor. As she took it up she gave a loud cry. "Oh, God!" she exclaimed, "now, indeed, we are delivered in a moment out of all our trouble! This is last year's almanac which I so long have searched for in vain. I thought that during my illness, while I lay senseless, it had been destroyed as waste-paper by the neighbours who came in to help us. Now it will be found that your father paid the money which they demand from us. Who would have thought that the almanac would have got stuck behind that chest, which came to us with the cottage, and which has never been moved from its place!"

She lighted a candle at once, and with tears of joy looked through the almanac. It was clear enough from it how much of the three hundred florins her late husband had owed at the beginning of the year, and how much he had earned and paid off. At the end were a few lines in old Meierbauer's own hand-writing,— "On St. Martin's Day I settled with Johann Blum, and he only owes me now fifty florins."

The mother clasped her hands with joy, and cried out with delight,—

"Oh, Ferdinand! thank the good God, for now we shall not have to go away; now we shall be allowed to remain in our dwelling."

"Is it so, indeed?" said the boy. "Then I have been the cause of it. If I had not begged you to move the chest, you would not have found the book. It might have stuck there for a hundred years."

The mother, quite overcome, was silent at first, and then said,— "Oh, my child,

God Himself has done it! I tremble when I think of it. Think, as we were both praying in our tears the bright fire-fly came in, and kindled the light by which this hidden book was found! Yes, indeed, God directs everything—even the very smallest matters. God's loving care watches over us. Nothing happens by chance. Without God's knowledge not a hair of our heads falls to the ground. Remember this through your life, and trust ever in Him, especially in the time of trouble. It is easy for Him to help and to save. He does not need to send us a bright angel, for He can deliver by a tiny insect."

The mother could not sleep for joy. At dawn of day she went to the chief magistrate. He sent for Meierbauer's heir. He came. He at once knew the hand-writing, and he was much ashamed that he had insulted the good woman before the tribunal, and described her as dishonest. The magistrate said that for this injury, and for all the trouble he had caused her, some compensation must be given. He said he was ready to make it.

But when the poor widow told the whole story of her prayer that night, and of the appearance of the fire-fly, the magistrate said, "It is the finger of God: He has helped you."

Young Meierbauer stood much moved, and said, "Yes, indeed, it is so. God, indeed, is the Father of the widows and orphans; but He is their avenger, too. Pardon me that I acted so harshly towards you. It was done through error. To make up for the sorrow which I have caused you, I will make you a present of the fifty florins, and if ever you get into trouble come to me, and I will always help you. For now I see plainly, that whoever trusts in God He never forsakes; and to trust in Him is worth far more than the greatest wealth. And if I get into trouble, or my wife becomes a widow and my children orphans, may He help us as He has helped you!"

"Only trust in Him," said the magistrate, "and be as honest and upright as this pious widow, then help will not fail you in the time of trouble." J. F. C.



CHRISTMAS CHARITY.

CHRISTMAS, which will soon be here, is not only a season for rejoicing, but has always been looked upon as a special time for hospitality and charity. At Christmas in former times, the great houses of England were open to all comers for many days, and none went empty away. Customs have changed now, and such hospitality is no longer needful; but at the same time there is much room for charity and benevolence in other ways, not only by giving money, as the boy and girl are doing in the picture, but also in visiting the poor in their homes, and in finding out their wants and supplying them.

There are many poor people at this wintry season who are unable, from old age or from sickness, to work. Some of them are very poor and in need of many comforts—coals perhaps, or warm clothing, perhaps even food. To visit and assist such, is true Christmas charity, and we should remember the example of Him who at this season gave Himself for us all.

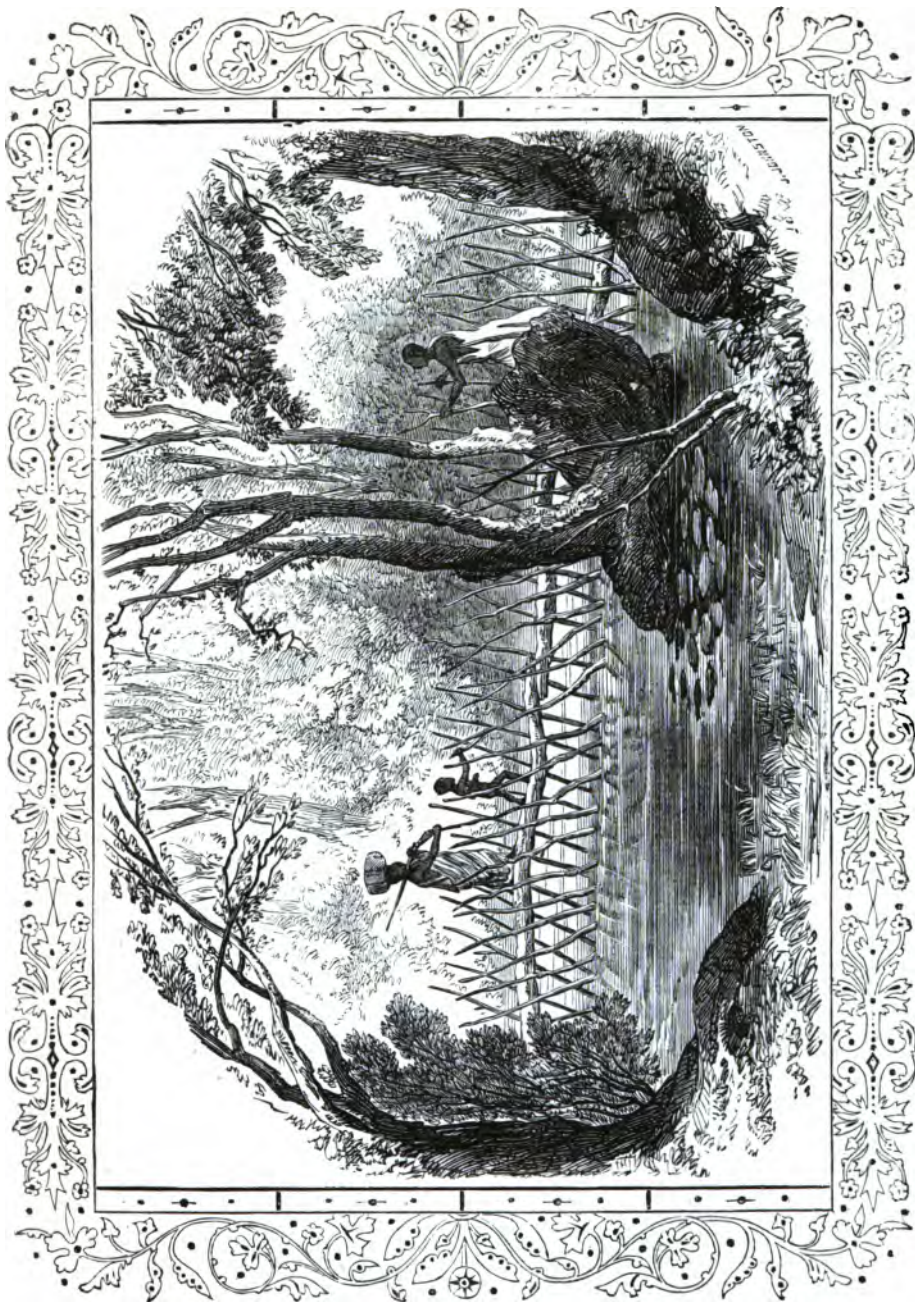
The following fable from the Arabic, teaches us this:—

A certain king once made a decree that whosoever should bestow charity upon another within his dominions should lose his hand for the offence. So, for fear of the penalty, all the people refrained from giving alms. One day, however, a beggar so entreated a poor woman for relief, that, risking the consequences, and being moved with pity, she gave him two cakes of bread. The news reached the king's ears, and he commanded that the woman should have both her hands cut off, and afterwards be led into the desert.

The punishment was inflicted, and the poor woman was taken into the wilderness, and there left alone. She felt great distress, and sat herself down under a rock and prepared for death. While she was so seated, two men came up to her and said, "Why do you weep?"

She replied, "Because I am desolate. My hands have been cut off, and I am brought here to die."

"For what offence did you lose your hands?" they then asked her, and she told them. The men then said, "Do you wish



to have your hands restored again?" and she answered "Yes." So the men supplicated God, and lo, her hands were restored to her. Then the men said, "We will now tell you who we are. We are the two cakes of bread which you gave to the beggar in his want."

Of course this story is not true, for it is only a fable; but under it lies a very important lesson, which we hope our young readers will try to find out for themselves.

W.



A RUSTIC BRIDGE IN AFRICA.

NEVER cross a bridge before you come to it," is an old proverb. We remember once when in Wales making a long journey over the hills to find out the waterfall of Pwll-dŷ, which was at the bottom of a very deep and narrow glen. The only way to see it was by scrambling three hundred feet down the steep bank, and then crossing a frail bridge made of the stems of two small pine-trees which had been thrown across the torrent in front of the fall. We accomplished the first part of the affair easily enough, but when we came to the bridge, behold one of the two trees had been swept away by a flood, and the other tree was rotten, and this was how we "crossed the bridge" to see the Pwll-dŷ fall.

The Africans in the picture are in no position of this sort, although their bridge looks very frail too, and they seem afraid of crossing it without holding on to the stakes. When the two parties meet in the middle, just where the trees overlap, they will have to mind how they pass each other, and we only hope that the gentleman who has a load upon his head will not drop it into the water.

This particular bridge is in the Ijebu country of West Africa, a land where water is by no means plentiful, and where a river, or a stream, or even a well, is a great

boon. The greater part of the Ijebu land is forest, the roads being merely lines cut through the trees, forming green, bowery lanes, very beautiful, but very unhealthy, and also dangerous from the snakes which infest the woods. The natives often come upon these snakes, and when they accidentally tread on the snake, they get bit; but in general the snake retreats into its hiding-place directly it hears the sound of anything approaching—a beautiful provision of nature for the safety both of the snake and the traveller.

In these woods also are vast quantities of parrots—grey birds with red tails, whose screeching deafens the ears. Monkeys also who make the din louder with their chatter—and at night, more dangerous animals still, so that an Ijebu wood is anything but an enviable place to be in.
B.

CHRISTMAS.

ONCE in the pastures of the East,
In the deep hush of night,
The glorious day of Heaven shone forth
All radiantly bright;

And soft sweet angel voices then
Sang hymns of peace on earth,
Glad tidings of great joy for us,
The Holy Saviour's birth.

No group of royal palaces
Welcomed the King of Heaven;
No reverence of many lands
To the Lord of all was given;

But He was born in poverty
Beneath a lowly shed,
The one fair thing the silver star
Which shone above His head.

O! gentle Jesus, once a child,
A child doth praise Thee now,
Make my heart pure as Thine was pure,
Let me be as wert Thou;

And meek and humble let me grow,
And holy let me be,
Then brighter than that silver star
God's love shall shine on me.

E. M. A. F. S.

CHRISTMAS EVE IN SWITZERLAND.

A Story, told by Professor Nagel, of Neuchâtel.

I HAD in my Sunday-school a little girl of eleven years. I never took more care of her than of others, and never expected more from her than from her fellow-scholars. She attended my school for about two years, when she was obliged to leave our town, and to go home into the country. In her village was no Sunday-school, and she felt the want deeply. What was to be done? She said to herself, "If there is no Sunday-school here, I must open one." No sooner said than done. She went to some little girls of the village, and told them what we did in our Sunday-school; and then she asked, "Will you not come to me next Sunday? and we will pray together, and sing beautiful hymns, and read the Bible, just as we did at Neuchâtel in the Sunday-school." They said, "We will come." And they came,—the first time five or six, then ten or twelve, then twenty or more; and the older girls of the village came also to the little girl, and asked permission to come too; and at length our dear little girl of eleven years saw around her every Sunday a school of about forty children, from six to fifteen years. She prayed with them, she taught them some of our hymns, she read the Bible as we do, and explained it as well as she could. Her mother, who sometimes listened from behind the door, said, "I could never hear her from the next room without shedding tears."

Christmas Eve came for this village, as for the whole earth. Now, you must know that Christmas Eve is, for our Sunday school at Neuchâtel, a very great treat. We meet in our best clothes; our church is ornamented with beautiful garlands; the illumination of gaslight is splendid; every heart is dancing for joy, and every eye shines like a star. We sing, we pray, we kneel in spirit around the little One in the manger of Bethlehem, and we realise a great gathering of angels around us and present in our midst, watching, singing, praying, and adoring with us. After we have rejoiced and adored with the angels the invisible but present Child of Bethle-

hem, in order to make our treat as complete as possible, every scholar and every teacher receives from the hand of the superintendent a little book written expressly for the occasion, and meant to make still more deep and lasting the impressions of Christmas Eve.

Now, our dear little Sunday-school superintendent could not let Christmas Eve pass over without any treat. She invited all the children of the school to come and to rejoice with her; and she intended reading the little Christmas book which she had received the year before. But there was suddenly a great difficulty. When the parents of her scholars heard of this invitation, they wished to come also; and the little girl could not refuse. She was distressed when she thought of speaking before grown people. What was she to do? She thought, "If this may be a blessing to them, I must not refuse it; yet if they come I cannot speak to them. Shall I beg my father to come and to help me? But he always laughed at me and my Sunday school. Nevertheless, I will ask him." She did; and her father, who cared little for these things, could not resist the entreaties of his girl; and when Christmas Eve came, he was for an hour, though unwillingly, under the superintendence of his own little girl, the teacher of a large Sunday-school of children and grown-up folk.

The treat was not so splendid and brilliant as ours, but you will allow me to believe that there were also many angels present, and the blessed One whom we adore, and whom the little girl tried to serve and to glorify as well as she could. And may I add, that the treat was blessed to the father of the little girl herself! Oh, if a little girl of eleven years gives us such an example, what should we do—what should we not do—for the glory of our blessed Saviour? Oh, let us try to love Him, and to serve Him, and to glorify Him with more devotedness and self-denial, than ever we have done, and we shall see in our little ones, and in our elder ones, and even in ourselves, far more abundant blessings than we ever yet have seen.



"He could not resist the entreaties of his girl."

Page 187.

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